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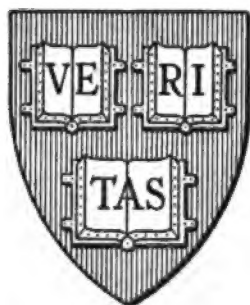
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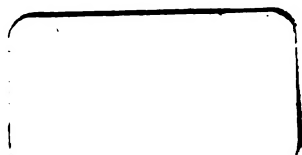




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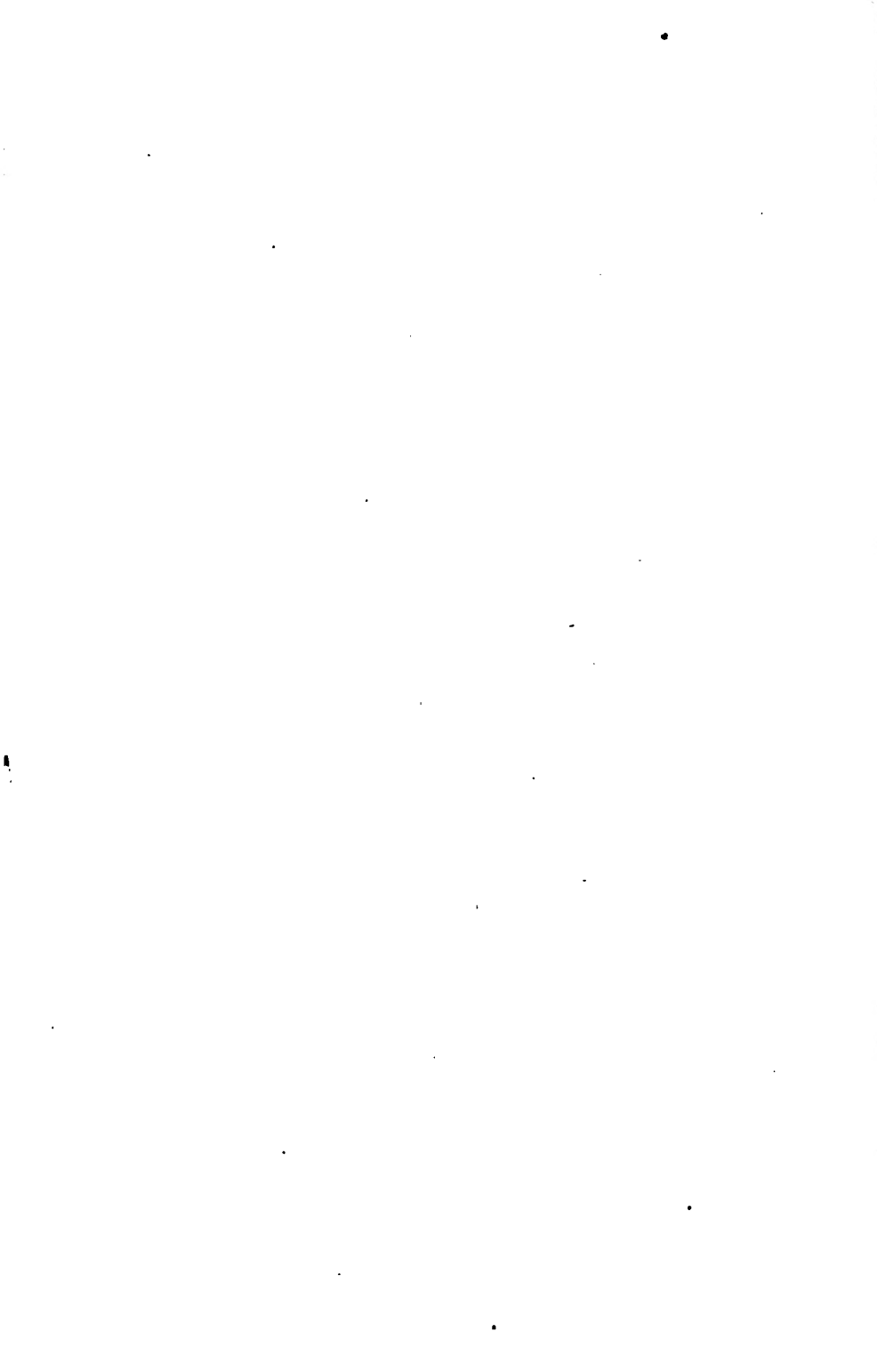
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**Vol. I. REVIEWS.**

**BADEN-BADEN.**

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*from C. A. <sup>revised</sup> ~~Stor~~ Bristle*

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## BROKEN-DOWN CRITIC.

PICKED UP BY HIMSELF.

*19<sup>th</sup> edn*

*Charles Astor Bristle*

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## COOPER'S "INDIAN AND INGIN."

American Review, September 1846.

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VERY narrow and imperfect is the common notion about novels, that they are fictitious narratives written to amuse. So far is this from being the case that we are persuaded no *successful* novelist ever wrote, or, at least, continued to write, without some ulterior aim—the advocacy of some principle or sentiment. A man of vivid imagination is generally, (if indeed we must not say necessarily,) also a man of strong personal feelings and partisan tendencies; and when he finds himself in the position of a moral agent, can he help making his fiction the vehicle of truth, or what he conceives to be truth? To uphold certain schools of art, literature or politics; to further social reforms; to discourage prejudices, and expose abuses; to make one nation better known to, and therefore, better appreciated by, another; to influence popular opinion, and even modify national habits of thought—these are some of the novelist's aims—not merely as some suppose in their short-sightedness, to help boarding-school misses and silly boys to kill time. Great, indeed, is his power for evil; but mighty is it likewise for good, nor is he always, thank God, a servant of Darkness. If D'Israeli perverts his dexterous humor to the gratification of private pique, and the resuscitation of defunct fallacies, Miss Martineau inculcates lessons of charity and long-suffering that are better than many sermons. If the French Romancers do their best to create a hell upon earth, by way of compensation for their disbelief in one hereafter, our own great novelist presents that spectacle which has ever been the philosopher's admiration—an individual who dares to tell the truth to a tyrant.

When "Satanstoe," the first of the Littlepage Manuscripts, appeared, it excited in us feelings of unmitigated



pleasure and lively expectation. The "Chainbearer" did not alloy that pleasure, or disappoint that expectation. We were glad to see our distinguished countryman applying his talents and energies to the exposure and censure of that evil condition of things which is at once the danger and the disgrace of our State. We were glad that he had written a novel on the subject, not a pamphlet, or an essay, or a disquisition; for men will read novels who will not read pamphlets and disquisitions and essays. We were glad (for the first times in our lives) that he was a "Democrat," for many men will listen to a Democrat who would not think of hearing a "British Whig." Above all we were glad to find throughout these books abundant signs that their author aims at being a Christian as well as a gentleman—to meet with abundant recognitions of the Highest Authority—expressed indeed, at times, with that disagreeable dogmatism which seems as if by some fatality to attend on all Mr. Cooper's opinions—but unmistakably genuine, and as such heartily refreshing in a time of infidel *litterateurs*, and infidel legislators.

"The Redskins; or Indian and Injin" completes his proposed task. "This book," we quote from the preface, "closes the series of the Littlepage Manuscripts which have been given to the world as containing a fair account of the comparative sacrifices of time, money and labor made respectively by the landlord and the tenants on a New-York estate, together with the manner in which usages and opinions are changing among us; as well as certain of the causes of these changes." The present illustration of these developments involves none of those thrilling incidents for which Mr. Cooper is so famous. His story is entirely subordinated to his moral. The narrative contains few, or, to speak plainly, no points of particular interest. A young man and his bachelor uncle, both large landed proprietors, return from their travels in Europe to find their tenants in arms, and their own homes in actual danger. Disguised as German pedlers they visit the seat of war, are present at an anti-rent meeting, and observe the actions and motives of sundry parties concerned in the movement. Discovering themselves in a moment of excitement they are fairly besieged, and the rioters endeavor to make their house literally "too hot to hold them." But the arrival of some *real*



Indians (on a visit to an old chief, a friend of the family) enables them to repel the "armed and disguised," or pretended "Ingins" till the sheriff comes to the rescue. Of course there is a heroine who is neither more nor less interesting than the author's heroines generally are, and a wedding to wind up with according to rule established. In all this, save the introduction of the Indians proper, (a very felicitous conception, and very neatly worked out,) there is nothing more than might happen to any landholder in the disturbed districts; not so much as has happened to some of them. In short, "the Redskins" is simply a vigorous exposure of *Anti-Rentism*. And it is also evident to us that the book was written for the masses, that it was designed to enlighten popular views, and expose popular fallacies. This we infer from the sedulous repetition of its chief points, and the labor expended in asserting and proving such positions as these: That it is possible for the poor to tyrannize over the rich as well as the rich over the poor; that exclusiveness on the part of an individual is no infringement of his neighbor's rights; that money does not make the gentleman, or guide the gentleman in the choice of his friends—positions which to a gentleman are simple axioms,

ἐς δὲ τοπὰν  
ἐρμηνέων κατίζει.

The work exhibits throughout much of one of the last qualities many of our readers might be disposed to give Mr. Cooper credit for—strong common sense. No judge's charge could state the points at issue more clearly and forcibly. And *pari passu* with this common sense runs that common honesty which has of late grown very uncommon among us. An utter fearlessness of popular prejudices, and that mighty bug-bear, "public opinion," characterizes the book. To be sure, as it is our unfortunate tendency to run into extremes, the author sometimes says annoying things which are merely annoying, and can do no good. For example, he is continually dwelling on the *provincialism* of our city. Now here we happen to differ from him, and after our own limited experience of foreign cities, are convinced that in all the essentials and attributes of a metropolis, New-York may



hold up its head with any of the second-class European capitals—Naples for instance. But suppose it otherwise—let New-York and New-Yorkers be as provincial as the novelist asserts, what good is there in his saying so? Nay, let them be as convinced of it as he is, what good would there be in their feeling so? Our own impulse would be rather to magnify and exaggerate the beauties of New-York in the hope of exciting her citizens to greater zeal for the honor of the Empire State, and greater vigilance against the danger which threatens so fair a domain. Again, we find most unnecessary offensiveness of language in every expression relative to New-England. Thus, Puritanism is described in these conciliatory terms which might move the envy of D'Israeli himself:

“The rowdy religion, half cant half blasphemy, that Cromwell and his associates entailed on so many Englishmen, but which was not without a degree of ferocious, narrow-minded sincerity about it after all.”

What would Thomas Carlyle say to this?

But whatever blame we might otherwise be disposed to bestow on Mr. C. for his worse than useless violence on some minor matters vanishes before our admiration of the unflinching resoluteness with which he has achieved his great task—that of telling his countrymen *the truth* on subjects of vital importance, respecting which most erroneous ideas are prevalent.

The main points affirmed, illustrated and *conclusively proved* in “The Redskins” are these:

1. That the alleged grievances of the tenants are utterly false and frivolous.

2. That the aim and object of the Anti-Renters is simply and absolutely to get other men's property without paying for it.

3. That the landlords' rights have been disregarded because they are rich men; and the rich being a minority, may, in this country of majorities, be tyrannized over with impunity.

4. That the present movement is only the first step to a general war upon property.

5. That there is still honesty enough in the community to put down anti-rentism at any moment, *if the honest men will only exert themselves properly.*

Of course, we shall not be understood to say that these



topics are treated of in regular order, or that they are the only ones introduced; but the readers of "The Red-Skins" (and may their name be legion!) will agree in the justice of the above analysis.

How all this has been done we shall endeavor partially to show, by extracts from the work itself, beginning with an indignant exposure of

#### THE POPULAR CANT ABOUT ARISTOCRACY.

"Lest this manuscript should get into the hands of some of those who do not understand the real condition of New-York society, it may be well to explain that 'aristocrat' means, in the parlance of the country, no other than a man of gentlemanlike tastes, habits, opinions and associations. There are gradations among the aristocracy; of the State, as well as among other men. Thus, he who is an aristocrat in a hamlet, would be very democratic in a village; and he of the village might be no aristocrat in the town at all; though in the towns, generally, indeed always, when their population has the least of a town character, the distinction ceases altogether, men quietly dropping into the traces of civilized society, and talking or thinking very little about it. To see the crying evils of American aristocracy, then, one must go into the country. There, indeed, a plenty of cases exist. Thus, if there happen to be a man whose property is assessed at twenty-five per cent. above that of all his neighbors—who must have right on his side bright as a cloudless sun to get a verdict, if obliged to appeal to the laws—who pays fifty per cent. more for everything he buys, and receives fifty per cent. less for everything he sells, than any other person near him—who is surrounded by rancorous enemies, in the midst of a seeming state of peace—who has everything he says and does perverted, and added to, and lied about—who is traduced because his dinner-hour is later than that of 'other folks'—who don't stoop, but is straight in the back—who presumes to doubt that this country, in general, and his own township in particular, is the focus of civilization—who hesitates about signing his name to any flagrant instance of ignorance, bad taste, or worse morals, that his neighbors may get up in the shape of a petition, remonstrance, or resolution—depend on it, that man is a prodigious aristocrat, and one who, for his many offence and manner of lording it over mankind, deserves to be banished."

ARISTOCRATIC EXCLUSIVENESS. (The interlocutors are the Pseudo-German and one of his tenants.)

"Well, Mr. Greisenbach, the difficulty about aristocracy is this Hugh Littlepage is rich, and his money gives him advantages that other men can't enj'y. Now, that sticks in some folks' crops."



"Oh! den it ist meant to divite property in dis cuntry; und to say no man might haf more ast anudder?"

"Folks don't go quite as far that, yet; though some of their talk does squint that-a-way, I must own. Now, there are folks about here that complain that old Madam Littlepage and her young ladies don't visit the poor.'

"Vell, if deys be hard-hearted, und hast no feelin's for der poor and miseraple—'

"No, no; that is not what I mean, neither. As for that sort of poor, everybody allows they do more for *them* than anybody else about here. But they don't visit the poor that isn't in want.'

"Vell, it ist a ferry coomfortable sort of poor dat ist not in any vant. Berhaps you mean dey don't associate wid 'em as equals?"

"That's it."

#### FEUDAL PRIVILEGES.

"Then the cry is raised of feudal privileges, because some of the Rensselear tenants are obliged to find so many days' work with their teams, or substitutes, to the landlord, and even because they have to pay annually a pair of fat fowls! We have seen enough of America, Hugh, to know that most husbandmen would be delighted to have the privilege of paying their debts in chickens and work, instead of in money, which renders the cry only so much the more wicked. But what is there more feudal in a tenant's thus paying his landlord, than in a butscher's contracting to furnish so much meat for a series of years, or a mail contractor's agreeing to carry the mail in a four-horse coach for a term of years, eh? No one objects to the rent in wheat, and why should they object to the rent in chickens? Is it because our republican farmers have got to be so *aristocratic* themselves, that they do not like to be thought poulterers? This is being aristocratric on the other side. These dignitaries should remember that if it be plebeian to furnish fowls, it is plebeian to receive them; and if the tenant has to find an individual who has to submit to the degradation of tendering a pair of fat fowls, the landlord has to find an individual who has to submit to the degradation of taking them, and of putting them away in the larder. It seems to me that one is an offset to the other."

#### HARDSHIP OF LONG LEASES.

"The longer a lease is, other things being equal, the better it is for the tenant, all the world over. Let us suppose two farms, the the one leased for five years, and the other for ever: Which tenant is most independent of the political influence of his landlord, to say nothing of the impossibility of controlling votes in this way in America, from a variety of causes? Certainly, he who has a lease for



ever. He is just as independent of his landlord, as his landlord can be of him, with the exception that he has rent to pay. In the latter case, he is precisely like any other debtor—like the poor man who contracts debts with the same storekeeper for a series of years. As for the possession of the farm, which we are to suppose is a desirable thing for the tenant, he of the long lease is clearly most independent, since the other may be ejected at the end of each five years. Nor is there the least difference as to acquiring the property in fee, since the landlord may sell equally in either case, if so disposed; and if not disposed, no honest man, under any system, ought to do anything to compel him so to do, either directly or indirectly; and no truly honest man would."

#### RESERVATION OF WOODLANDS.

"This wood, exceeding a thousand acres in extent, stretched down from the hills along some broken and otherwise little valuable land, and had been reserved from the axe to meet the wants of some future day. It was mine, therefore, in the fullest sense of the word; and singular as it may seem, one of the grounds of accusation brought against me and my predecessors was that we had *declined leasing it!* Thus, on the one hand, we were abused for having leased our land, and, on the other, for not having leased it. The fact is, we, in common with other extensive landlords, are expected to use our property as much as possible for the particular benefit of other people, while those other people are expected to use *their* property as much as possible for their own particular benefit."

#### PLEA OF IGNORANCE. (Lequitor an English servant.)

"What is it you wants, I says to him? you can't all be landlords—somebody must be tenants; and if you didn't want to be tenants, how come you to be so? Land is plenty in this country, and cheap too; and why didn't you buy your land at first, instead of coming to rent of Mr. Hugh; and now when you *have* rented, to be quarreling about the very thing you did of your own accord?"

"Dere you didst dell 'em a goot t'ing; and vhat might der 'Squire say to dat?"

"Oh! he was quite dumb-founded, at first; then he said that in old times, when people first rented these lands, they didn't *know* as much as they do now, or they never would have done it."

"Und you could answer dat; or vast it your durn to be dumb-founded?"

"I pitched it into him, as they says; I did. Says I, how's this, says I—you are for ever boasting how much you Americans know—and how the people knows everything that ought to be done about politics and religion—and you proclaim far and near that your



yeomen are the salt of the earth—and yet you don't know how to bargain for your leases!"

#### THE DEMAGOGUE THE COURTIER'S COUNTERPART

"Although there was a good deal of the English footmann in John's logic and feeling, there was also a good deal of truth in what he said. The part where he accused Newcome of holding one set of opinions in private, concerning *his* masters, and another in public, is true to the life. There is not, at this moment, within the wide reach of the American borders, one demagogue to be found who might not, with justice, be accused of precisely the same deception. There is not one demagogue in the whole country, who, if he lived in a monarchy, would not be the humblest advocate of men in power, ready to kneel at the feet of those who stood in the sovereign's presence."

"True to the life" indeed! It is old Aristotle over again. The Stagyrta has a passage worth referring to in this connection:

"Another form of Democracy is where all citizens are eligible to office, as in the former instance, but the multitude is supreme, instead of the law; and this is the case when the people's resolutions (*τὰ ψηφίσματα*) are valid, but the law is not. *This is brought about by demagogues*; for in republics administered according to law, a demagogue finds no place, since the best citizens have the preëminence; but demagogues spring up where the laws are not valid. For there the people becomes a monarch—one tyrant composed of many. \*\*\*\* Such a people, then, being virtually a king, seeks to play the king, as it is not controlled by law, and becomes depotic, so that flatterers are in repute; and this form among popular governments is analogous to tyranny among monarchies. Wherefore, also, their disposition is the same, and both are wont to tyrannize over the better class, and the resolutions of the one answer to the ukases (*τὰ ἐπιτάγματα*) of the other, *and the demagogue and courtier are equivalent, and each other's counterpart.*"—POLITICS, Book 4, Chap. 4.

#### ONE LAW FOR THE RICH AND ANOTHER FOR THE POOR.

"There is a landlord in this State, a man of large means, who became liable for the debts of another to a considerable amount. At the very moment when *his* rents could not be collected, owing to *your* interference and the remissness of those in authority to enforce the laws, the sheriff entered *his* honse, and sold its contents, in order to satisfy an execution against *him*! There is American aristocracy for you, and I am sorry to add American justice, as justice has got to be administered among us."

#### A POPULAR SYLLOGISM. (From an Anti-Rent Lecture.)

"Let the people but truly rule, and all must come well. The people have no temptation to do wrong. If they hurt the state they hurt



themselves, for they are the state Is a man likely to hurt himself? Equality is my axiom."

#### SLUMBERING OVER A VOLCANO.

"Look at the newspapers that will be put into your hands to-morrow morning, fresh from Wall and Pine and Ann streets. They will be in convulsions, if some unfortunate wight of a Senator speak of adding an extra corporal to a regiment of foot, as an alarming war-demonstration, or quote the fall of a fancy stock that has not one cent of intrinsic value, as if it betokened the downfall of a nation; while they doze over this volcano, which is raging and gathering strength beneath the whole community, menacing destruction to the nation itself, which is the father of stocks."

MR. COOPER'S OPINION OF THAT ATROCIOUS PRIVILEGIUM CALLED, WITH EXQUISITE IRONY, "AN ACT TO EQUALIZE TAXATION."

"We deem the first of these measures far more tyrannical than the attempt of Great Britain to tax her colonies, which brought about the Revolution. It is of the same general character—that or unjust taxation; while it is attended by circumstances of aggravation that were altogether wanting in the policy of the mother country. This is not a tax for revenue, which is not needed; but a tax to 'choke off' the landlords, to use a common American phrase. It is clearly taxing *nothing*, or it is taxing the same property twice. It is done to conciliate three or four thousand voters, who are now in the market, at the expense of three or four hundred who, it is known, are not to be bought. It is unjust in its motives, its means and its end. The measure is discreditable to civilization, and an outrage on liberty."

#### A NUT FOR THE ADVOCATES OF CONCESSION.

"That profound principle of legislation, which concedes the right in order to maintain quiet, is admirably adapted to forming sinners; and, if carried out in favor of all who may happen to covet their neighbors' goods, would, in a short time render this community the very paradise of knaves."

#### A MAKE-BELIEVE GOVERNMENT WORSE THAN NONE.

"Manytongues took charge of the watch, though he laughed at the probability of there being any farther disturbance that night.

"As for the red-skins," he said, "they would as soon sleep out under the trees, at this season of the year, as sleep under a roof; and as for waking—cats a'nt their equals. No—no—Colonel; leave it all to me, and I'll carry you through the night as quietly as if we were on the prer-ies, and living under good wholesome prer-ie law."



"'As quietly as if we were on the prairies!' We had then reached that pass in New-York, that after one burning, a citizen might really hope to pass the remainder of his night as quietly as if he were on the prairies! And there was that frothy, lumbering, useless machine, called a government, at Albany, within fifty miles of us, as placid, as self-satisfied, as much convinced that this was the greatest people on earth, and itself their illustrious representatives, as if the disturbed counties were so many gardens of Eden, before sin and transgression had become known to it! If it was doing anything in the premises, it was probably calculating the minimum the tenant should pay for the landlord's land, when the latter might be sufficiently worried to part with his estate. Perhaps it was illustrating its notions of liberty, by naming the precise sum that one citizen ought to accept, in order that the covetous longings of another should be satisfied!'"

#### WHAT IT'S COMING TO.

"'I agree with you, Hugh,' said my uncle, in reply to a remark of my own; 'there is little use in making ourselves unhappy about evils that *we* cannot help. If we *are* to be burnt up and stripped of our property, we *shall* be burnt up and stripped of our property. I have a competency secured in Europe, and we can all live on *that*, with economy, should the worst come to the worst.'

"'It is as strange thing, to hear an American talk of seeking a refuge of any sort in the old world!'"

"'If matters proceed in the lively manner they have for the last ten years, you'll hear of it often. Hitherto, the rich of Europe have been in then habit of laying by a penny in America against an evil day; but the time will soon come, unless there is a great change, when the rich of America will return the compliment in kind. We are worse off than if we were in a state of nature, in many respects; having *our* hands tied by the responsibility that belongs to our position and means, while those who choose to assail us are under a mere nominal restraint.'"

Cooper's Receipt for Anti-Rentism is, in substance simply to *disfranchise those counties which resist the operation of law*. When will our rul—our *servants*, we mean, be *men* enough to use so efficacious a remedy?

But our limits compel us to take leave for the present of this most valuable book. We say *for the present*, for its themes are too momentous to be disposed of so briefly. But one thing we must say in conclusion. The parts of this work which might seem, to the inexperienced reader, the wildest, such as the hints at



emigration, suggestions of repelling force by force, &c., *do not originale with Mr. Cooper*. The same thoughts have found a lodgment in many a breast already, though they have never till now found so open an utterance. More than one party of Americans in Europe (albeit it might consist of more than a bachelor uncle and his nephew) has held such a conversation as Hugh and Roger held in Paris. More than one American has given his friends as grim a welcome home as Jack Dunning did the Littlepages.

And finally (for there is room for a few more lines) if any one should blame us for omitting the lesser duties of criticism—for having failed to observe that Mr. Cooper's style is at times incurably wooden, and his sentences frequently read the very opposite of what they mean, and his mottoes occasionally have not the least earthly connection with the subjects of the chapters to which they are prefixed—we have noticed these blemishes and others, as who has not in every novel that Mr. Cooper ever wrote. But at present we are in no frame of mind to carp at the spots on the face of the sun. If all our authors would write as truthfully as the author of "Indian and Ingin" we should be content to have them all write as clumsily.

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## TRANSLATORS OF HOMER.\*

American Review, October 1846.

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"BELIER, mon ami, commencez par le commencement." As we are going to write about translations of Homer let us first get a clear idea of what translation, and more particularly *poetical* translation, is. Some of the popular nations on the subject are indirectly expressed in the following passage, from the writings of an eminent logician:

"A good translation of a poem (though perhaps, strictly speaking, what is so called is rather an *imitation*) ["and accordingly," adds the author, in a note, "it should be observed that, as all admit, none but a poet can be qualified to translate a poem"] is read, by one well

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\*Homer's *Illiad*. Translated by Munford. Boston: Little & Brown. 1846.



acquainted with the original with equal or even superior pleasure to that which it affords one ignorant of that original, whereas the best translation of a prose work (at least of one not principally valued for beauty of style) will seldom be read by one familiar with the original." — *Whateley's Rhetoric*, p. 334.

Under the head "Fallacies" in the Archbishop's *Logic* is mentioned, (p. 207,) that of *indirect assumption*; of which there are two or three palpable instances in the above extract. First of all we do most positively deny, from our own experience, that "the best translation of a prose work will seldom be read by one familiar with the original." We have known men who read with pleasure Hobbes' Thucydides and the Oxford Tacitus, though fairly acquainted with the originals. To be sure a great deal lies in the parenthesis "at least of one not principally valued for beauty of style." A work is usually read either for its style or its matter; and he who reads it for matter alone will usually prefer consulting the original as the safest course, the best translators blundering occasionally. Some, who are intensely fond of original poetry, cannot abide any poetical translations at all; but it would hardly answer to generalize from their case.

But this by the way. Our main quarrel is with the assertions that none but a poet can translate poetry, and that good poetical translation is *imitation*. The first of these many receive as an axiom. Qualify it, and say that a poet's translation must be superior to that of any other man, and a still greater number will acquiesce in it. Yet we are slow to admit it even in this qualified form. There are, it is true, some strong plausibilities against us. We naturally admit, it may be said, that to translate a prose work well one must write good prose; why should not the same rule hold good in the case of poetry? Then the facts of the case are against us. Great poets are usually great translators. There is Pope, and Byron, and Shelley, and Coleridge, &c. But let us see how these positions will bear examination.

In what sense is a good translator of prose a good prose-writer? Must a man be a great historian to translate Thucydides well? Or a great novelist to translate Balzac well? Hardly. When we say that our translator is a good prose-writer we mean that he has a good prose



style. Correspondingly then, a good translator of poetry must have a good poetic style, *i. e.* poetic manner; between which and poetic matter there is no necessary connection. Poetry consists in two things, the idea and the expression. Now a man may have great facility of poetic expression, and that even in a foreign tongue, without the power of originating a single poetic idea. There are plenty of young men in England who will paraphrase Burns and Shakspeare into Latin and Greek verses scarcely to be surpassed for elegance by anything in Ovid or Euripides. On the other hand poetic ideas may exist conjointly with a very limited power of poetic expression, as in the case of Miss Barrett. To form a great poet both are required; to form a poet at all the latter alone is insufficient.

Next let us see how many of the best translators of poetry have been poets. And here be it observed, by way of *caveat*, that as translation is an inferior department of literature, the translations of one who has already acquired a poetical reputation will derive an adventitious celebrity from his original works. They will be read as part of his poetry, and thus become better known than the productions of one who is no poet. *E. g.* supposing Chapman's *Illiad* to be better than Pope's still Pope's will always be more generally read, because Pope as a poet was infinitely above Chapman. Coleridge's *Wallenstein* is universally admired in England and generally praised in Germany. Byron translated very well. Shelley with much spirit, though very inaccurately. Leigh Hunt very well. Wilson particularly well. Pope's *imitation* of Homer we shall waive considering for the present. Among ourselves Halleck and Longfellow are good translators. So stands the case against us.\* Now for the other side. Old Chapman was no poet. Neither is "Young Chapman," the only man who has any idea of putting *Æschylus* into English verse, and the best English translator of *Theocritus* (which last commendation, by the way, is no very exalted panegyric). Elton has never been guilty of original poetry, but his *Specimens* from the Classics are some of the best translations

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\* For obvious reasons we confine ourselves to English translators



extant. † Equally innocent is Carlyle, whose versions of German ballads, extracts from the *Nibelungen Lied*, &c., are not to be surpassed. Aytoun is a more doubtful case. He is an inexhaustible writer of parodies, and his serious poem, *Hermotimus*, is a work of much promise. Yet no one would call him a great poet; and no one who has read Blackwood's Anthological articles can help calling him a great translator.

But here our facts may be impugned, and we come to our remaining point of difference with Whateley, the fundamental question, indeed, of all; *What is translation?*

Ten years ago we remember, at New Haven, they had a system they called literal translation; which consisted in rendering every separate word by its primitive dictionary meaning, making, in reality, as complete "Dog English" as the oft-quoted *verte canem ex is* "Dog Latin". There is extant a Boston translation of the *Tusculan Questions* on this principle which is well worth borrowing, to see what impracticable jargon may be written with English words. There are also some English attempts upon German philosophical works which are prime specimens of this lingo, particularly Dobson's *perversion* of

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† In support of this assertion we request particular attention to his translation of that noble passage in the *Peleus* and *Thetis* of Catullus, beginning

"At parte ex alia florens volitabat Iacchus," &c.

"But in another part Iacchus, flush'd  
 With bloom of youth, came flying from above  
 With choirs of Satyrs and Sileni born  
 In Indian Nyse: seeking thee he came,  
 Oh Ariadne! with thy love inflamed.  
 They, blithe, from every side came revelling on  
 Distracted with jocund madness; with a burst  
 Of Bacchic outcries and with tossing heads.  
 Some shook their ivy-shrouded spears; and some  
 From hand to hand in wild and fitful feast  
 Snatch'd a torn heifer's limbs: some girt themselves  
 With twisted serpents: others bore along  
 In hollow arks the mysteries of the God,  
 Mysteries to uninitiated ear  
 In silence wrapt. On timbrels others smote  
 With tapering hands, or from smooth orbs of brass  
 Clank'd shrill a tinkling sound; and many blew  
 The horn's hoarse blare, and the barbaric pipe  
 Bray'd harsh upon the ear its dinning tune."



Schleiermacher. The other extreme is where the *translator* only takes his author for a guide, and interweaves new ideas or casts out old ones in accordance with his fancy or compliance with his metrical inability. The English scholars already alluded to aim only at producing elegant Latin and Greek verses, bearing some resemblance to the English ones on which they are founded. It would sometimes be rather puzzling to re-translate these elaborate performances, as for instance, when Ben Jonson's "Tempering his greatness with his gravity" is expressed by

σέβας τε πάντας ἑμμελῶς ἐπράξατο.

A line which it requires a tolerable Greek scholar to comprehend. That a translator has unlimited license in this way will hardly be maintained. Few, for example, would call Marlowe's Sestiad a translation of Musæus' Sestiad. When Mitchell expands two lines of Aristophanes into three or four verses and a chorus, the boldest would hesitate to call his paraphrase a translation. But literal word-for-word rendering is absurd in prose and (happily) impossible in verse.

Where then is the medium? What is to be our definition of translation, as distinguished from paraphrase on the one hand and school-boy construing on the other? The best we can find is Arnold's, viz., *Giving Equivalents*. How will the popular notion square with this? Is Pope's

"While scarce the swains their feeding flocks survey,

Lost and confused amidst the thickening day

an *equivalent* to Homers

τόσσον τίς τ' ἐπιλεύσσει ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ λᾶαν ἴησιν?

Is Chapman's

"Well, but not wisely, loved a cruel maid"

(involving as it does a choice bit of Shakspeare) an *equivalent* to Theocritus' ἀπηνέα εἶχεν ἑταίρον? Is Taylor's

"Tramp, tramp along the land they rode,

Splash, splash along the sea,"

an *equivalent* to Burger's

Hurra, hurra, hop, hop, hop,

Gings fort im sausenden galop?"

In this last instance the imitation is admitted by both English and Germans to surpass the original. It is *more than an equivalent*, but on that very account not a translation.



Let us look at the question in another point of view. If imitation is translation then imitators are plagiarists. Take any case of imitation, e. g. Homer's description of Olympus,

“ὄθι φασὶ θεῶν ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ  
ἔμμεναι· οὔτ’ ἀνέμοισι τινάσσεται, οὔτε ποτ’ ὄμβρῳ  
δεύεται οὔτε χιὼν ἐπιπίλνεται· ἀλλὰ μάλ’ αἴθρη  
πέπταται ἀννέφελος, λευκὴ δ’ ἐπιδέδρομεν αὔγλῃ.”

Thus imitated by Lucretius,

“Apparet divūm numen sedesque quietæ  
Quas neque concutiunt venti, nec nubila nimbis  
Aspergunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina  
Cana cadens violat; semper innubilus æther  
Integer et largè diffuso lumine ridet.”

Any by Tennyson,

“I am going a long way  
To the island-valley of Avilion,  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Or ever wind blows loudly, but it lies  
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns  
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea.”

Would any one accuse Lucretius and Tennyson of plagiarizing from Homer? Yet *if imitation be translation*, they can scarcely help being obnoxious to the charge. Let us take an ardent admirer and accurate critic of poetry, who is master of both his languages and has the facility of versifying and command of metre acquired by much poetic reading and study. It is quite possible for a man to possess all these qualities in a high degree without a single spark of that imagination which is the primary idea implied in (*connoted by*, as the Logicians would say) the term *poet*. Such a man, we contend, has all the requisites for a translator of poetry. He understands how to make the dress, and the figure is given him complete. In some respects he is even better qualified than a poet, for there is no fear of his trying to improve on his original as Pope was tempted to deal with Homer.

We have been thus particular in explaining ourselves, because it is an indispensable preliminary to the comparison of different translations that we should have a clear idea of what the excellence of a translation consists in. According to the popular notion verse translations are to be estimated by their merits as poems in



their own vernacular; and that is the best translation which would be the best original poem if its original did not exist. According to our theory, (which is that of Cowper, Elton, Carlyle, and we may add Wilson, in spite of the praise he has on one occasion bestowed upon Pope's Homer,) every translation must be rigorously compared with its original, and that is the best translation which would give a man ignorant of the original language, the best idea of what the original is like.

Homer was the bible of his countrymen for several centuries: he has since been the admiration of the civilized world. It was most natural that many attempts should be made to re-produce him in modern languages. In this respect the Germans have been fortunate. If the English have not, it has not been for want of trying.

The complete translation of Homer best known are Chapman's, Pope's, Cowper's and Sotheby's. Besides these are Ogilby's and Hobbes', an Ossianic prose translation by Macpherson, and the more recent versions of Morrice (?) and Brandreth in blank verse. Of partial translations from one book to ten, the number is very considerable. A friend recently enumerated to us eleven, to which we were able to add five, and there is little doubt that the list might be still further extended. We have now in Munford's Iliad an American edition to the roll of competitors.

Chapman's (1600) was the first complete translation. (Hall had published, nineteen years previously, the first ten books in Alexandrines, a translation of a translation.) After the appearance of Pope's Homer he lay unjustly in the shade for some time. He was restored to notice partly by the New School who favored irregular versification, partly by a very different style of critic, Wilson. Since then it has been fashionable to exalt him immeasurably above Pope, and extol him as the prince of translators. To do this is to talk very wildly: a cursory examination will show that his translation has serious defects. The most obvious is his breaking up the even flow of Homer's versification by constantly running his lines into one another. Now if there is any distinctive feature of Hexameter verse it is the full, rounded close of each line; to which Chapman pays no more heed than



if he were translating the Horatian Alcaic or any other continuous stanza. His interpolations, too, are sometimes very annoying. On no point do Chapman's admirers lay greater stress than his fidelity as a translator; yet he has taken as great liberties with his author in *his* way, as Pope in *his*. Most of these additions may be brought under one head—forced conceit. Conceit was the vice of that time. Thus Marlowe's Sestiad, an exceedingly beautiful and luscious poem, is so disfigured by the quaintnesses in its first fifty lines, that most readers are killed off there and unable to go further. The blemishes of a similar kind in Shakspeare are familiar to all. On opening Chapman at random (in the 5th book) we find examples of this on either page. "Who *taking* chariot, took his wound," and "bowed his knees to death *and sacrificed to earth*." All through Cooke Taylor's edition, which carefully discriminates the added matter, we find at the bottom of almost every page notes like these: "Not in the original." "This play on words is Chapman's, not Homer's." "No warranty for this expression in the original," &c. Other additions he makes for the sake of explanation, e. g., in describing the sacrifice in the 3d book.

"The true vows of the Gods (term'd theirs since made before their eyes.)"

"with which away he cut

The wool from both fronts of the lambs which (as a rite in use  
Of execration to their heads that brake the plighted truce)  
The heralds of both hosts did give the peers of both."

Where the words within parentheses are entirely his own. Some of his *expansions* such as 'Αἰδης (the Unseeing) into "that invisible cave that no light comforts," are more admissible as they help to bring out fully the author's meaning. Yet even these are too paraphrastic to please us.

But Chapman has also some great merits as a translator. In the first place he has hit upon the only English metre which will suit all parts of Homer. For though some passages may be *transfused* into blank verse as Elton has shown, what blank verse or what Iambic rhyme can adequately express the Descent of Poseidon, or such dancing verses as these?



“ἀλλ’ ἄγ’ ἐμῶν ὀχέων ἐπιβήσοο ὄφρα ἴδῃαι.  
οἷσι τρώϊοι ἵπποι, ἐπισταμενοὶ πεδίοιο  
κραιπνὰ μάλ’ ἐνθα διώκεμεν ἦδε φέβεσθαι.”

Well rendered by Chapman,

“Come, then ascend to me,

That thou may’st try our Trojan horse, how, skill’d in field they be,  
And in pursuing those that fly, or flying when pursued,  
How excellent they are of foot.”

Except that *τρώϊοι ἵπποι* means “the Horses of Tros,” not “Trojan Horses.”

Next he expresses with much accuracy and felicity the Homeric epithets. Pope seems to have thought that because those epithets were constant, it was allowable, nay preferable, to omit them, as they had lost their original definiteness. Now in some extreme cases this is true, e. g., *φιλὸς* comes to be simply equivalent to the possessive pronoun; but in general these adjectives give precision as well as beauty. In the English ballads “England is always Merrie England, Douglas always the Doughty Douglas; all the gold is red and all the ladies are gay.” What should we think of a German translator who omitted these picturesque epithets?

Again, whatever freedom Chapman may have used in other places, he always in his similes follows Homer as closely as possible, laboring to carry out all his points of comparison without adding any others. Ever and anon, too, amid his broken verse we come across a magnificently swelling line equal to Pope in harmony and superior to Cowper in fidelity.

Many of Chapman’s expressions are now obsolete; on which account, as well as that already mentioned, Cooke Taylor’s edition of him is very valuable, as it contains a full explanation of all those words which would be likely to perplex an ordinary reader.

Ogilby’s work was published with much splendor for that day, and adorned with elaborate engravings of belligerents curiously out of drawing. It is a rare book, not on account of its merits. There are a few copies in this city, but we have not been able to lay hands on one, which is no severe disappointment to ourselves or great loss to our readers.

Hobbes was past seventy when he began to learn



Greek. Nevertheless his Thucydides is the best translation extant, not merely for forcible English, but for actual scholarship and comprehension of that very difficult author. But his Iliad reads like a Burlesque. It is as if he had really taken pains to vulgarize it. For instance, Zeus thus addresses the assembled gods;

"You Gods all and you Goddesses, *d'ye hear?*"

and the confirmation of his oath to Thetis is thus ludicrously narrated:

"This said with his black brows to her he nodded,

Wherewith displayed was his face divine,

Olympus shook at stirring of his godhead,

And Thetis from him jumped into the brine"

His Odyssey is rather better.

Pope's Homer was extravagantly praised in its day, and by a natural re-action extravagantly disparaged since. Pope was a poet, and a great poet: whoever says he was not is simply an ass. We saw it coolly stated in print not long ago that "nothing could be worse than his translation of Homer." The individual who could make such an assertion deliberately should be condemned to read Sotheby and Munford straight through. The great merit of Pope's Homer is the perfect structure of his verse: its great defect, his utter misunderstanding or willful perversion of nearly all the similes.

Cowper, though "among the warmest admirers of Mr. Pope as an original writer," could not be satisfied with him as a translator. His own version is one of the closest possibles. He pays great attention to the similes, the epithets, and what we may call the *refrain lines*. He presents Homer in all his simplicity, and nearly all his strength, but with scarcely a vestige of his harmony. For though sometimes successful in the onomatopœic lines, he is generally dry and unmelodious to a painful degree; for which reason his translation, excellent as it is in many respects, can never be popular.

The editor of the—will be glad to hear that Sotheby's translation *has* been published—some twelve years ago. It professed to combine Pope's elegance with Cowper's accuracy. How far this attempt was successful the reader shall have full opportunity of judging.

The same object was aimed at by William Munford, a Virginian, whose Iliad has been recently published;



only he wrote in blank verse and Sotheby in rhyme. That a man should begin to translate Homer without having ever heard of Cowper's version is astonishing; that Munford should consider his own version superior to Cowper's is still more surprising. A translation of the Iliad into blank verse, at once accurate and harmonious, is not quite an impossibility, but it is by no means τοῦ τυχόντος. Tennyson could achieve one, were it possible to wake him up out of cloudland and inspire him with ordinary energy. Elton *possibly* might. We should be slow to trust any other man living, or that has lived for some time. Munford's performance is just such a one as any educated man might execute who would take the trouble; and has no possible value as an addition to the already existing stock of Homeric literature. Appended to it are various stale, stupid, common-place, congregational-country-parson-ish notes. Here, for example, is an original and brilliant one, containing some *recherché* information.

—"Priam's spurious son.

"The morality of ancient times was very loose, in relation to indulgence with women. The kings and heroes had many concubines as well as wives. The Christian religion alone introduced, and enforced, by awful sanctions, a system of purity in this respect."

To prove our words we proceed to put Munford to the test—severe indeed, but one challenged by every new translator—of comparison with his predecessors. And we begin with

#### CHRYSES' PRAYER AND APOLLO'S VENGEFUL DESCENT.

"Ὡς ἔφατ' ἔδδεισεν δ' ὁ γέρον, καὶ ἐπείθετο μύθῳ. κ. τ. λ.  
Lib. I. 33—49.

#### LITERAL VERSION.

Thus spake he: old man feared and obeyed his word. And went the silently along the shore of the loud-resounding sea.\* Then going apart the aged man prayed much to King Apollo, whom fair-haired Leto bare.

Hear me, God of the silver bow, who art wont to protect Chrysa, and Cilla the divine, and who rulest with might over Tenedos; Smintheus! if ever I have built thy temple agreeably to thee, or ever

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\* If you prefer the Reuchlinian pronunciation *polifisweeo* you must translate "the many rippled sea."



consumed to thee the fat thighs of bulls and goats, fulfil this my desire. May the Greeks atone for my tears by means of thy arrows.

Thus spake he praying: him Phœbus Apollo heard. And descended the heights of Olympus angry at heart; having upon his shoulders his bow and completely-covered quiver. And the arrows clashed on the shoulders of him enraged, as he moved. So he went on like the night. Then he sat apart from the ships and dispatched an arrow. And terrible was the clang of the silver bow.

#### CHAPMAN.

This said, the sea-beat shore  
(Obeying his high will) the priest trod off with haste  
and fear;  
And walking silent, till he left far off his enemies' ear,  
Phœbus, fair-hair'd Latona's son, he stirr'd up with a vow  
To this stern purpose: Hear, thou God that bear'st the  
silver bow,  
That Chrysa guard'st, rul'st Tenedos with strong hand,  
and the round  
Of Cilla most divine dost walk; — O Sminthius! if crown'd  
With thankful offerings thy rich fane I ever saw, or fired  
Fat thighs of oxen and of goats to thee, this grace desired  
Vouchsafe to me: pains for my tears, let these rude  
Greeks repay,  
Forced with thy arrows. Thus he pray'd, and Phœbus  
heard him pray;  
And vex'd at heart, down from the tops of steep heaven  
stoop'd; his bow  
And quiver cover'd round, his hands did on his shoulders  
throw;  
And of the angry deity the arrows as he moved  
Rattled about him. Like the night he ranged the host,  
and roved  
(Apart the fleet set) terribly: with his hard-loosing hand  
His silver bow twang'd.

This is not a favorable specimen. The best lines of the original are cut up and stowed away in odd corners of different verses. "Hard-loosing hand," is a forcible epithet, but "not in the original." All we can find to commend here is, "Thus he prayed and Phœbus heard him pray," and "the round dost walk" for *ἀμφιβέβηκας*.

#### POPE.

The trembling priest along the shore return'd,  
And in the anguish of a father mourn'd.



Disconsolate, not daring to complain,  
 Silent he wander'd by the sounding main:  
 Till, safe at distance, to his god he prays,  
 The god who darts around the world his rays.

"Oh Smintheus! sprung from fair Latona's line,  
 Thou guardian power of Cilla the divine,  
 Thou source of light! whom Tenedos adores,  
 And whose bright presence gilds thy Chrysa's shores:  
 If e'er with wreaths I hung thy sacred fane,  
 Or fed the flames with fat of oxen slain;  
 God of the silver bow! thy shafts employ,  
 Avenge thy servant, and the Greeks destroy."

Thus Chryses pray'd: the favouring power attends,  
 And from Olympus' lofty top descends.

*Bent was his bow, the Grecian hearts to wound,  
 Fierce as he moved, his silver shafts resound.*

Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread.  
 And gloomy darkness rolled around his head  
 The fleet in view, he twang'd his deadly bow,  
 And hissing fly the feather'd fates below.

Here the second, third, and sixth lines are utterly redundant. The brief comparison of Phœbus' approach is amplified much to its injury. The Italicized couplet is a grand one, though the first line is too much written for the second, as is often the case in Pope's best couplets. The numerous additions and alterations it is needless to particularize more minutely.

#### COWPER

He spake, the old priest trembled and obey'd.  
 Forlorn he roamed the ocean's sounding shore,  
 And solitary, with much prayer his King  
 Bright-hair'd Latona's son Phœbus, implored.

God of the silver bow, who with thy power  
 Encirclest Chrysa, and who reign'st supreme  
 In Tenedos and Cilla the divine,

Sminthian Apollo! If I e'er adorn'd  
 Thy beauteous fane, or on thy altar burn'd  
 The fat acceptable of bull's or goats,  
 Grant my petition. With thy shafts avenge  
 On the Achaian host thy servant's tears.

Such prayer he made, and it was heard. The God,  
 Down from Olympus with his *radiant* bow



And his full quiver o'er his shoulder slung,  
 Marched in his anger; shaken as he moved  
 His rattling arrows told of his approach.  
 Gloomy he came as night; sat from the ships  
 Apart, and sent an arrow. Clang'd the cord.  
 Dread-sounding, bounding on the silver bow.

Very close throughout. *Radiant* is almost the only word unwarranted by the original. "Full" is not correct for ἀμφιρροφέα. "Encirclest Chrysa" is good. The second line, with its succession of open O's is very sonorous; probably the most successful attempt ever made to express the famous original.

Now let us have

HOBBS

(*Just for the fun of the thing.*)

Frighted with this away the old man went,  
 And often as he walked on the sand,  
 His prayers to Apollo up he sent,  
 Hear me Apollo with thy bow in hand,  
 That honor'd art in Tenedos and Chryse,  
 And unto whom Cilla great honor bears,  
 If thou accepted hast my sacrifice,  
 Pay th' Argives with thy arrows for my tears.  
 His prayer was granted by the deity,  
 Who with his silver bow and arrow keen  
 Descended from Olympus silently  
 In likeness of the sable night unseen.  
 His bow and quiver both behind him hang,  
 The arrows *chink* as often as he *jogs* (!)  
 And as he shot the bow was heard to twang.

How cleverly he spoils or omits every single point in the original! We give also, as a curiosity, a specimen of

MACPHERSON.

He, *frowning*, spoke; the old man feared and shrunk  
 from his high commands. *Sad*, silent, *slow*, he took his  
 way, along the wide resounding main. Apart *and distant*  
 from the host, he poured his *mournful* soul in prayer: he  
 poured it forth to bowyer Phœbus, whom the long-haired  
 Latona bore.

Hear, bearer of the splendid bow! Guardian of  
 Chrysa, of Cilla the divine! Thou that o'er Tenedos  
 reign'st with fame! O Smintheus, hear my prayer! If



ever with wreaths I adorned, O Phœbus! thy beauteous fane: if ever thine altars smoked with offerings—from the flocks and herds of Chryses: *if me thou regardest in ought*, O Phœbus, hear my prayer! Punish Greece for these tears of mine. Send thy deadly arrow abroad.

He, praying, spoke. Apollo heard. He descended, from heaven, enraged in soul. On his shoulders his bow is hung: His quiver filled with deadly shafts! which harshly rattled, as he strode in his wrath. Like night he is borne along: then darkly sitting, apart from the host, he sends an arrow abroad. The bright bow emits a dreadful sound, as the shaft flies, *unseen*, from the string.

Macpherson pretends to be quite literal, but is sufficiently diffuse, as the superfluous words which we have italicized in the above extract show.

#### SOTHEBY.

Hoar Chryses shuddering back his footstep bent,  
And by the sounding deep in silence went.  
Till far apart the hapless father pray'd,  
And thus invoked Apollo's vengeful aid—  
"God of the silver bow whose sovereign sway  
Thy Chrysa, Cilla, Tenedos obey,  
If e'er I wreathed thy splendid shrine, or fed  
Thy altars flaming as the victims bled,  
Loose thy avenging shafts, bid Greece repay.  
*Tears of a father turned in scorn away!*"  
Thus Chryses pray'd: his prayer Apollo heard,  
And heavenly vengeance kindled at the word.  
He from Olympus' brow in fury bore  
His bow and quiver's death-denouncingstore.  
The arrows rattling round his viewless flight  
Clang'd as the God descended dark as night.  
Then Phœbus stay'd, and from the fleet apart  
Launch'd on the host the inevitable dart,  
And ever as he wing'd the shaft below  
Dire was the twanging of the silver bow.

The fourth line is tame; the tenth line strong and harmonious; neither of them answer to anything in the original. The twelfth is in the style of Pope's very worst interpolations. The penultimate line is evidently written for the couplet, after the Popian precedent. "Inevitable"



and "death-denouncing" which are meant to be *strengthening* epithets have the very opposite effect.

## MUNFORD.

The old man trembled, and his word obey'd.  
 Silent he went, along the sounding shore  
 Of loudly-roaring ocean; but, at length,  
 Remote, he fervently implored the king  
 Apollo, whom bright-hair'd Latona bore.  
 Hear me, O thou, with silver bow adorn'd  
 Who guardest Chrysa with thy power divine,  
 And heavenly Cilla! King of Tenedos,  
 Great Smintheus, hear! If ever I have crown'd  
 Thy honor'd fane with wreaths, or ever burn'd  
 The fatted thighs of bulls or goats to thee;  
 I pray thee now, accomplish my request!  
 By thy avenging arrows may the Greeks,  
 For these my tears, atone! So pray'd the priest,  
 And dread Apollo heard him. And he, in wrath,  
 Descended from Olympus' lofty cliffs,  
 Arm'd with his bow, and quiver well encased.  
 His fatal arrows rattled, threatening death,  
 As fiercely he approach'd; and, dark as night,  
 He came, *terrific*. From Achaia's fleet  
 Apart, his stand he took, and sent his shaft.  
 Shrill twang'd with direful clang, the silver bow.

There is nothing particularly bad in this version (except the peculiarly enfeebling introduction of "terrific," nor anything particularly good. Its proper designation is *ordinary*. It is precisely the sort of translation that nine out of ten readers of Homer would have the ability to write and the good sense not to publish.

Our next selection shall be

## THE GRECIAN MUSTER.

Ἦντε πύρ ἀτδῆλον, κ. τ. λ. Lib. II. 455—473.

## LITERAL VERSION.

As a destructive fire consumes an immense wood, on the peaks of a mountain, and the blaze is conspicuous from afar, so as they marched, the all-glittering gleam from their admirable armor went up through the firmament to heaven.

And as the many tribes of winged birds, geese, or cranes, or long-necked swans, in the meadow of Asius, around the streams of Cayster, fly hither and thither upborne, exulting on their wings, and



the meadow resounds as they light-down-one-after-another. So of them the many tribes from the ships and tents poured forth into the Scamandrian plain, while the ground re-echoed terribly under the feet of themselves and their horses. So they stood in the flowery meadow of Scamander, innumerable, as many as the leaves and flowers grow in spring.

As are the many tribes of thickly-congregated flies which hover about the shepherd's fold in the spring season, when also milk moistens the pails; so many stood in the plain the long-haired Greeks against the Trojans, longing to destroy them utterly.

CHAPMAN.

And as a fire upon  
A huge wood, on the heights of hills, that far off hurls  
his light,  
So the divine brass shined on these, thus thrusting on  
for fight:  
Their splendor through the air reach'd heaven: and as  
about the flood  
Caïster, in an Asian mead, flocks of the airy brood,  
Cranes, geese, or long-necked swans, here, there, proud  
of their pinions fly,  
And in their falls lay out such throats, that with their  
spiritful cry  
The meadow shrieks again; so here, these many na-  
tion'd men,  
Flow'd over the Scamandrian field, from tents and ships:  
the din  
Was dreadful, that the feet of men and horse beat out  
of earth.  
And in the flourishing mead they stood, thick as the  
odorous birth  
Of flowers, or leaves bred in the spring: or thick as  
swarms of flies  
Throng them to sheep-cotes, when each swarm his erring  
wing applies  
To milk dew'd on the milk-maid's pails: all eagerly  
disposed  
To give to ruin the Ilians.

The first two similes are most accurately rendered, *αἰδοῦλον* is the only omission; "spiritful" and "odorous" the only insertions. Some of the expressions are highly picturesque—"Far off hurls his light;" "Flowed over the Scamandrian plain," "The din beat out of earth." The



third simile Chapman has closed off in a hurry and injured by over compression.

## POPE.

As on some mountain, through the lofty grove,  
 The crackling flames ascend, and blaze above;  
 The fires expanding as the winds arise,  
 Shoot their long beams, and kindle half the skies:  
 So from the polish'd arms, and brazen shields,  
 A gleamy splendor flashed along the fields.  
 Not less their number than the embodied cranes,  
 Or milk-white swans in Asius' watery plains,  
 That o'er the windings of Cayster's springs  
 Stretch their long necks, and clap their rustling wings,  
 Now tower aloft, and course in airy rounds;  
 Now light with noise: with noise the field resounds.  
 Thus numerous and confused, extending wide,  
 The legions crowd Scamander's flowery side;  
 With rushing troops the plains are covered o'er,  
*And thundering footsteps shake the sounding shore.*  
 Along the river's level meads they stand,  
 Thick as in spring the flowers adorn the land,  
 Or leaves the trees; or thick as insects play,  
*The wandering nation of a summer's day,*  
 That, drawn by milky streams, at evening hours,  
 In gather'd swarms surround the rural bowers;  
 From pail to pail with busy murmur run  
 The gilded legions, glittering in the sun.  
 So throng'd, so close, the Grecian squadrons stood  
 In radiant arms, and thirst for Trojan blood.

The first simile is here utterly misunderstood and misrepresented. Homer compares the *sudden* flash of armor to the *immediate* effect of a distant blaze. Pope gives us a *gradual* conflagration, and thus precisely destroys the point of comparison.

In regard to the second, though not agreeing with Taylor, "that Homer's design was to describe confusion of movement rather than confusion of sound;" for we think it evident that *both* are represented; we must admit with him that Pope's epithet "embodied" is introduced "with more than usual infelicity." One of the most prominent ideas in the original is the *successive* lighting of the birds, which Pope has entirely overlooked.



The simile of the flies Chapman takes as alluding to the *numbers* of the Greeks. We think him right. His editor refers it to their *eagerness for fight*. Pope seems to understand it of their *appearance*; on which Taylor justly observes that "the flies that swarm round milk-pails are remarkable for anything rather than their glitter."

"*Ἄρρη εἰσπρινῆ*" is Spring not Summer.

#### COWPER.

As when devouring flames some forest seize  
On the high mountains, splendid from afar  
The blaze appears, so, moving on the plain,  
The steel clad host innumerable flash'd to heaven.  
And as a multitude of fowls in flocks  
Assembled various, geese, or cranes, or swans  
Lithe necked, long hovering o'er Cayster's banks  
On wanton plumes, successive on the mead  
Alight at last, and with a clang so loud  
That all the hollow vale of Asius rings;  
In number such from ships and tents effused,  
They cover'd the Scamandrian plain; the earth  
Rebellow'd to the feet of horse and men.  
They overspread Scamander's grassy vale,  
Myriads, as leaves, or as the flowers of spring.  
As in the hovel where the peasant milks  
His kine in spring-time, when his pails are filled,  
Thick clouds of humming insects on the wing  
Swarm all around him, so the Grecians swarm'd  
An unsumm'd multitude o'er all the plain,  
Bright arm'd, high crested, and athirst for war.

Generally correct but wanting life and spirit—Cowper's usual fault.

#### SOTHEBY.

As flames on flames spread far and wide their light  
From forests blazing on the mountain height,  
Thus flash'd the lightning of their arms afar,  
And heaven's bright cope beam'd back the glare of war.  
As feathery nations sweeping on amain,  
Flights of the long-neck'd swan, and silvery crane,  
From Asius' meads by clear Cayster's spring,  
Now here, now there, exultant wind on wing,  
In gay contention strive, while long and loud



The champaign rings beneath the plumed cloud;  
 So from their camp and fleet the innumerable train  
 Pour'd forth their confluence on Scamander's plain.  
 Beneath the march of myriads earth around  
 Thunder'd and rattling war-hoofs rock'd the ground,  
 In numbers numberless as leaves and flowers  
*That fill the cup of spring and robe her bowers.*  
 As in fair springtime when the swain recalls  
 The lowing cattle to their wonted stalls,  
 Eve's milking hour from æther downward draws  
 The flies' winged nations swarming o'er the vase;  
 Thus Greece-poured forth her multitudinous throng,  
*All burning to avenge their country's wrong.*

Very pretentious and very bad. All the distinctive epithets are omitted. *Ἀτδηλον, ἄσπετον, θεσπεσίον*—not an attempt to express any of them, but instead a quantity of redundant and otiose adjectives in other places, "*silvery crane*" (Sotheby, like Pope, thinks the goose too vulgar to introduce and turns him into a showy embellishment for his crane,) "*clear Cayster's spring*" and a number of lines that have no connection with the original but are merely put in to make fine writing. Two of the most platitudinous we have italicized. "Vase" to rhyme with "draws" is fearfully vulgar.

#### MUNFORD.

As raging fire consumes a wide-spread wood,  
 On some high mountain's summit, whence the blaze  
 Is seen afar; so, from their burnish'd arms,  
*With radiant glories gleam'd effulgent light,*  
 Flaming through æther to the vault of heaven!  
 And as unnumber'd flocks of swift-wing'd birds,  
 Geese, cranes, or stately swans with arching necks,  
 In Asius' meadow' round Cayster's streams,  
 Fly here and there exulting on the wing,  
 And (while with clamor they alight) the fields  
 Their cries re-echo, so the numerous tribes  
 Of Greeks, from ships and tents outpouring, throng'd  
 Scamander's plain. The ground, with dreadful din,  
 Sounded beneath the feet of bounding steeds  
 And trampling warriors. Numberless they stood,  
 Covering that verdant meadow, as the leaves,  
 And flowers of spring, or as the countless swarms



Of restless flies that in a shepherd's fold  
 At summer eve, when milk bedews the pails,  
 Play infinite! So numerous were the Greeks,  
 Ardent for battle, breathing dire revenge  
*And death against the Trojans.*

The first two lines are better than Cowper. The version is correct on the whole, except that *εἰαρινῇ* is mistranslated, and the force of that important word, *προκαθιζόντων* overlooked. The italicized lines are as tawdry as Sotheby's, but, in general the fault is rather Cowper's—want of life.

We now turn to the Fourth Book, where

PANDARUS, INSTIGATED BY ATHENE, SHOOT'S AT MENELAUS  
 AND BREAKS THE TRUCE.

Ως φάτ' Ἀθηναίη · τῷ δὲ φρένας ἄφρονι πεῖθεν. κ τ. λ.

LITERAL VERSION.

Thus spoke Athene, and persuaded his mind, fool that he was! Straightway he drew-from-its case his well-polished bow [made of the horn] of a springing wild goat, which, as his wont was, he himself once hit under the breast, (having caught the animal in ambush as it stepped out of the rock), and pierced in the chest; so it fell backward on the rock. The horns from its head grew out sixteen palms; these a horn-polishing artificer arranged and fitted, and, having well smoothed the whole, put a golden tip upon it. And this he [Pandarus] skillfully bent and made ready, while his brave comrades held their shields before him, for fear the warlike Grecian youths should rush up ere Menelaus the Martial, son of Atreus, was hit. Next he drew the case from his quiver and selected an arrow that-had-never-been shot, winged, the foundation of dark pangs. Then swiftly he adapted the keen arrow to the string, vowing that he would sacrifice to Lyceanborn, bow-renowned Apollo, a famous hecatomb of a hundred firstling lambs, if he returned home to the walls of sacred Zelia. Then he took and drew at the same time the notched end and the ox sinews; the string he brought to his breast, the iron point to the bow. Thereupon, when he had stretched the mighty bow to a circle, the bow twanged, the string sung mightily, and the sharp-pointed shaft bounded forth longing to fly among the crowd.

CHAPMAN.

With this, the mad-gift-greedy man, Minerva did persuade;  
 Who instantly drew forth a bow, most admirably made  
 Of the antler of a jumping goat, bred in a steep upland;  
 Which archer-like, (as long before, he took his hidden  
 stand,



The evick skipping from a rock,) into the breast he smote,  
 And headlong fell'd him from his clift. The forehead  
 of the goat  
 Held out a wondrous goodly palm, that sixteen branches  
 brought;  
 Of all which, (join'd,) a useful bow a skillful bowyer  
 wrought;  
 (Which pick'd and polish'd,) both the ends he hid with  
 horns of gold.  
 And this bow, bent, he close laid down, and bade his  
 soldiers hold  
 Their shields before him: lest the Greeks, discerning him,  
 should rise  
 In tumults ere the Spartan king could be his arrow's prize.  
 Mean space, with all his care he choosed and from his  
 quiver drew,  
*An arrow; feather'd best for flight, and yet that never flew;*  
 Strong headed, and most apt to pierce; then took he up  
 his bow,  
 And nock'd his shaft, the ground whence all their future  
 grief did grow.  
 When praying to his god the sun, that was in Lycia bred,  
 And king of archers, promising that he the blood would  
 shed  
 Of full an hundred first fallen lambs, all offer'd to his  
 name,  
 When to Zelia's sacred walls, from rescued Troy he  
 came;—  
 He took his arrow by the nock, and to his bended breast  
 The oxy sinew close he drew, even till the pile did rest  
 Upon the bosom of the bow; and as that savage prize,  
 His strength constrain'd into an orb—as if the wind  
 did rise—  
 The coming of it made a noise, the sinew forged string  
 Did give a mighty twang; and forth the eager shaft  
 did sing  
 (Affecting speediness of flight) amongst the Achive throng.  
 Very spirited and dashing. The earlier lines are not  
 very close to the original, but Chapman improves in  
 fidelity as he proceeds. "Evick" seems to be a ἄπαξ  
 λεγόμενον. Taylor explains it "the evicted," i. e. "doomed  
 one." Ὑπιος is not "headlong," but quite the reverse.



## POPE.

He heard, and madly, at the motion pleased,  
 His polish'd bow with hasty rashness seized.  
 'Twas formed of horn, and smooth'd with artful toil;  
 A mountain goat resign'd the shining spoil,  
 Who pierced long since beneath his arrows bled;  
 The stately quarry on the cliffs lay dead,  
 And sixteen palms his brow's large honors spread;  
 The workman join'd, and shaped the bended horns,  
 And beaten gold each taper point adorns.  
 This, by the Greeks unseen, the warrior bends,  
 Screen'd by the shields of his surrounding friends.  
 There meditates the mark; and couching low,  
 Fits the sharp arrow to the well-strung bow.  
 One from a hundred feather'd deaths he chose,  
 Fated to wound, and cause of future woes.  
 Then offers vows with hecatombs to crown  
 Apollo's altars in his native town.  
 Now with full force the yielding horn he bends,  
 Drawn to an arch, and joins the doubling ends;  
 Close to his breast he strains the nerve below,  
 Till the barb'd point approach the circling bow;  
 The impatient weapon whizzes on the wing;  
 Sounds the tough horn, and twangs the quivering string.  
 These are fine rolling stanzas. But the fourth line is  
 exceedingly weak; and all the *minutiæ* which so graphically  
 depict the goat's capture are omitted. The last couplets  
 are fine, though "impatient" is not strong enough to express  
 all the personality conveyed by *καὶ ὁμίλον ἐπίπτεσθαι*  
*μενεαίρων*.

## COWPER.

So Pallas spake, to whom infatuate he  
 Listening, uncased at once his polish'd bow.  
 That bow, the laden brows of a wild goat  
 Salacious had supplied; him on a day  
 Forth issuing from his cave, in ambush placed  
 He wounded with an arrow to his breast  
 Dispatch'd, and on the rock supine he fell.  
 Each horn had from his head tall growth attain'd,  
 Full sixteen palms: them shaven smooth the smith  
 Had aptly join'd, and tipt their points with gold.  
 That bow he strung, then, stooping, planted firm



The nether horn, his comrades hold the while  
 Screening him close with shields, lest ere the prince  
 Were stricken, Menelaus, brave in arms,  
 The Greeks with fierce assault should interpose,  
 He raised his quiver's lid; he chose a dart  
*Unflown, full-fledged, and barb'd with pangs of death.*  
 He lodg'd in haste the arrow on the string,  
 And vow'd to Lycian Phœbus bow-renown'd  
 An hecatomb, all firstlings of the flock,  
 To fair Zeleia's walls once safe restored.

*Compressing next nerve and notch'd arrow head  
 He drew back both together, to his pap  
 Drew home the nerve, the barb home to his bow,  
 And when the horn was curved to a wide arch,  
 He twang'd it. Whizz'd the bowstring, and the reed  
 Leap'd off impatient for the distant throng.*  
 Marvellously accurate, save only the mistranslation of  
 ἰξάλου. The closeness with which Cowper here follows  
 his original, even in places not easy to express in intel-  
 ligible English prose, is really astonishing.

You have read three noble translations of a noble  
 passage. Draw a long breath, and then attack.

#### SOTHEBY.

Thus spake persuasively the blue-eyed Maid,  
 And thoughtless Pandarus her word obey'd —  
 Swift from its case drew forth his polished bow  
 Form'd of the wanton goat's broad-hornéd brow,  
 Whom once, in ambush as the archer lay,  
 His shaft arrested on his mounted way,  
 And pierced beneath the breast *that bled in gore,*  
*The rock whereon he fell to rise no more.*  
 The horns *that proudly turreted his head,*  
 A wondrous growth of sixteen palms outspread.  
 The Bowman these *terrific to behold,*  
 Had labored into shape and tipp'd with gold,  
 That bow he strung, and where he couchant lay,  
 His warriors closed their shields before his way.  
 Lest unawares a Greek should forward start  
 Ere the wing'd shaft reached Menelaus' heart.  
 His quiver's lid he raised, an arrow chose  
 Fresh fledged, and pregnant with severest woes,  
 Then fixed it on the cord, and loudly vowed



His flock's choice firstlings to the archer god.  
 Whene'er from Ilion's wall returned again  
 His voice once more should hail Zeleia's fane.  
 Now with the cord at once he backward drew  
 The notch *that quiver'd ere the arrow flew*,  
 Strain'd to his breast the string, and ere to part  
 Poised on the bow the steel that barb'd the dart;  
 And when the horns, now near and nearer strain'd,  
 With all his strength, an ampler arch had gain'd,  
 Shrill twang'd the bow, the cord with quivering sound  
 Whizz'd, and the dart flew eager for the wound.

We have marked a few of Sotheby's most obvious amplifications. Comment on their *beauty* is unnecessary. He gives as another neat rhyme in "vow'd" and "God." The third and fifth lines alone are commendable.

#### MUNFORD.

So spake Minerva, and his frantic mind  
 Persuaded. Forth at once he drew his bow,  
 Of horn smooth-polish'd of a lecherous goat,  
 A wild one, which himself had in the breast  
 Shot, as it issued from its rocky cave.  
 He, lying near in ambush, from below  
 Between the forelegs pierced it: on the rock  
 It backwards fell outstretched. Upon its head  
 Grew ample horns, full sixteen palms in length.  
 These, bending to his purpose skillfully,  
 A workman shaped, and nicely polishing  
 The bow elastic, tipp'd both ends with gold.  
 This bow he, stooping, rested on the ground  
 With sly contrivance; having strung it well,  
 His watchful friends before him held their shields  
 Protective, lest the Greeks should on him rush  
 Ere he could shoot the gallant Spartan king,  
 The leader of Achaia. He meanwhile  
 Removed his quiver's lid, and chose a shaft  
 Ne'er used till then, fresh-feather'd for its flight,  
 Of black and bitter woes the direful cause!  
 Quick to the string that fatal shaft he fix'd  
 But vow'd to bright Apollo, god of day,  
 Famed archer of the skies, to pay at home  
 A splendid hecatomb of firstling lambs,  
 Whene'er to Zelia's sacred walls return'd.



The arrow's notch and bow-string drawn at once,  
 The string his breast, the point of steel approach'd  
 The bow's great arch, and when its large round curve  
 Was to the utmost bent, with sharp loud clang  
 It sounded; shrilly twang'd the quivering string,  
 Away the arrow flew among the crowd,  
 Eager to bathe in blood its thirsty point!

The spirit of his original has here put some life into our translator. The version is generally correct, except the wrong translation of *ἰξάλου* and the false quantity of *Zelia*.\*

We now proceed to

#### THE MEETING OF THE HOSTS.

Οἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ δ' ἐς χῶρον ἔναι κ. τ. λ. (Lib. IV. 446, sqq.)

#### LITERAL VERSION.

Now when, according to purpose, they were come into one place, meeting, they engaged their shields and their spears and the might of brassen-corseleted heroes; their bossy shields met each other, and a great uproar arose. Then was there mingled the cry and the exulting shout of men, both the slayers and the slain; earth flowed with blood. As when winter torrents, flowing down the mountains, combine-to-throw into a hollow-where-glens-meet a strong stream from copious sources, within a hollow defile, and the shepherd hears their din afar off among the mountains: such was their cry and their confusion while mingling.

#### CHAPMAN.

But when in one field both the foes their fury did content,  
 And both came under reach of darts, then darts and  
 shields opposed  
 To darts and shields; strength answer'd strength; then  
 swords and targets closed  
 With swords and targets; both with pikes; and then did  
 tumult rise  
 Up to her heights; then conquerors' boasts mix'd with  
 the conquer'd's cries:  
 Earth flow'd with blood. And as from hills rain-waters  
 headlong fall,

---

\* Unhappily, this is not Munford's worst mistake of the kind. In looking for some mare's nest pointed out in one of his luminous notes, we stumbled upon

"With *Thalia* blooming in immortal youth."

This from a *Scholar* (?) and a translator of Homer (!)



That all ways eat huge ruts, which, met in one bed, fill  
 a vall  
 With such a confluence of streams, that on the mountain  
 grounds  
 Far off, in frightened shepherds' ears, the bustling noise  
 rebounds:  
 So grew their conflicts, and so show'd their scuffling to  
 the ear,  
 With flight and clamor still commix'd and all effects  
 of fear.  
 Not so successful as usual. The last couplet is very  
 diffuse.

## POPE.

Now shield with shield, with helmet helmet closed,  
 To armor armor, lance to lance opposed,  
 Host against host with shadowy squadrons drew,  
 The sounding darts in iron tempests flew,  
 Victors and vanquish'd join promiscuous cries,  
 And thrilling shouts and dying groans arise;  
 With streaming blood the slippery fields are died,  
 And slaughter'd heroes swell the dreadful tide.

As torrents roll, increased by numerous rills,  
 With rage impetuous down their echoing hills;  
 Rush to the vales, and, pour'd along the plain,  
 Roar through a thousand channels to the main;  
 The distant shepherd trembling hears the sound:  
 So mix both hosts, and so their cries rebound.

The first couplet is a grand one, and the third meritorious. "*Shadowy squadrons*" is not very intelligible. The fourth line is a rather common-place addition, and the eighth has taken the one fatal step beyond the sublime. "Earth flowed with blood," but it is too much to make the "slaughtered heroes" swim about in it. As usual, the point of the simile is lost. Homer's torrents do not "roar to the main:" they meet in a narrow place among the glens (*μισγάγκειαν*).

## COWPER.

And now the battle joined. Shield clashed with shield,  
 And spear with spear, conflicting corslets rang,  
 Boss'd bucklers met, and tumult wild arose.  
 Then, many a yell was heard, and many a shout  
 Loud intermix'd, the slayer o'er the maimed



Exulting, and the field was drench'd with blood.  
 As when two winter torrents rolling down  
 The mountains, shoot their floods through gullies huge  
 Into one gulf below, station'd remote  
 The shepherd in the uplands hears the roar;  
 Such was the thunder of the mingling hosts.

Are only two torrents intended? We doubt it. Homer uses the plural, not the dual.

SOTHEYBY.

Host against host, now nearer and more near,  
 Corslet on corslet clattered, spear on spear,  
 Close and more close the bosses, shield on shield,  
 Clash'd, and wide spread the thunder of the field,  
 And shouts and groans, the slayer and the slain  
 Mixed, as the blood dark-gushed along the plain.  
 As, when the springs with wintry storms *o'erflow*,  
 Two torrents dashing from the mountain *brow*,  
 Roar with conflicting floods that rush between  
 The rocky windings of the rent ravine.  
 Afar the shepherd, as the cataract raves,  
 Hears on the cliff the clashing of the waves,  
 Thus, as the hosts rush'd onward, rang afar  
 The Bray and thunder of the storm of war.

Another rhyme that don't rhyme! But this is the best we have had from Sotheby so far. The opening couplets are capital, and

"The rocky windings of the rent ravine," is an admirable line. The conclusion is too ambitious.

MUNFORD.

When now encountering, to close fight they came,  
 Together met their shields, together flew  
 Their javelins, hurl'd with utmost strength of men,  
 Mail-clad, the bossy shields conflicting clashed,  
 And loudly universal tumult rose.  
 The doleful cry of dying men was there,  
 The victor's joyful shout: earth stream'd with blood,  
 As when two mountain torrents, swoln with rain,  
 Pour down from sources vast, impetuous floods,  
 Which meeting in a narrow vale between  
 Confining precipices, foam and roar:  
 The sound, among the mountains far remote,



A shepherd startled hears: such was the cry  
And such the terror when they battle joined.

There is nothing here to call for especial praise or censure. The ninth line is a tolerably good one.

We should like to quote the Hector and Andromache scene, for the sake of showing off Elton; but it is too long to extract. A few lines from the opening we must be allowed.

Ὡς ἄρα φωνήσας ἀπέβη κορυθαίολος Ἑκτωρ. κ τ. λ. (Lib. VI. 369, sqq.)

#### LITERAL VERSION IN HEXAMETERS.

So thus having spoken, the casque-nodding Hector departed.

Speedily then he came to his well-situate habitation,  
But he found not the white-armed Andromache there in  
her chambers;

For she with her boy and her well-clad female attendant,  
Standing upon the tower, was wailing, ay, and lamenting.  
Hector, then, when he found not his blameless spouse  
in the palace,

Went to the threshold, stopped, and thus accosted the  
maidens:

"Come now, tell me, ye maids, the truth unerring relate me,  
Whither went forth the white-armed Andromache, out  
of her chamber?

Or to her brothers' sisters, or well-clad wives of her  
brothers,

Or to Athene's fane has she gone forth, there where the  
other

Fair-haired women of Troy are the dreadful goddess  
appeasing?"

Then to his speech in turn replied the housekeeper careful:  
"Hector, since your command is strict the truth to re-  
port you,

Nor to her husband's sisters, nor well-clad wives of her  
brothers,

Nor to Athene's fane has she gone forth, there where  
the other

Fair-haired women of Troy are the dreadful goddess  
appeasing, &c.

These beautiful introductory lines have not received  
so much care as they deserved at the hands of the trans-



lators, who have apparently been more solicitous to do justice to what followed. They are slurred over by

CHAPMAN.

This said, he went to see  
 The virtuous princess, his true wife, whitearmed Andromache.  
 She, with her infant son and maid, was climb'd the tow'r, about  
 The sight of him that sought for her, weeping and crying out.  
 Hector, not finding her at home, was going forth; retired —  
 Stood in the gate — her women call'd; and curiously inquired  
 Where she was gone; — bade tell him true, if she were gone to see  
 His sisters, or his brothers' wives; or whether she should be  
 At temple with the other dames, t' implore Minerva's ruth.  
 Her woman answer'd: Since he ask'd, and urged so much the truth,  
 The truth was she was neither gone to see his brothers' wives,  
 His sisters, nor t' implore the ruth of Pallas on their lives.  
 By turning the direct address and reply into an indirect narration, the whole force of the passage is destroyed.

POPE.

He said, and pass'd with sad presaging heart  
 To seek his spouse, his soul's far dearer part;  
 At home he sought her, but he sought in vain;  
 She, with one maid of all her menial train,  
 Had thence retired; and with her second joy,  
 The young Astyanax, the hope of Troy:  
 Pensive she stood on Ilion's towery height,  
 Beheld the war, and sicken'd at the sight;  
 There her sad eyes in vain her lord explore,  
 Or weep the wounds her bleeding country bore.  
 But he who found not whom his soul desired,  
 Whose virtue charm'd him as her beauty fired,  
 Stood in the gates, and ask'd what way she bent  
 Her parting step. If to the fane she went,



Where late the mourning matrons made resort;  
 Or sought her sisters in the Trojan court?  
 "Not to the court," replied the attendant train,  
 "Nor mix'd with matrons to Minerva's fane."

Here the answer is given, the address only mentioned. And while the minute inquiry and response are thus hurried over, whole lines of extraneous matter are inserted previously. For the simple and strong epithets of the original, "the well-situate dwelling," "the blameless wife," "the white-armed Andromache," we have, substituted, such phrases as "with sad, presaging heart," "whom his soul desired," "the wounds her bleeding country bore," &c. Of the eighteen lines, *six* are entirely independent of the original.

## COWPER.

So spake the dauntless hero, and withdrew.  
 But reaching soon his own well-built abode  
 He found not fair Andromache; she stood  
 Lamenting Hector, with the nurse who bore  
 Her infant, on a turret's top sublime.  
 He then, not finding his chaste spouse within,  
 Thus, from the portal, of her train inquired.  
 Tell me ye maidens, whither went from home  
 Andromache the fair? Went she to see  
 Her female kindred of my father's house,  
 Or to Minerva's temple, where convened  
 The bright-haired matrons of the city seek  
 To sooth the awful goddess? Tell me true.  
 To whom his household's governess discrete.  
 Since, Hector, truth is thy demand, receive  
 True answer. Neither went she forth to see  
 Her female kindred of thy father's house,  
 Nor to Minerva's temple, where convened  
 The bright-haired matrons of the city seek  
 To sooth the awful goddess."

## SOTHEYBY.

Thus Hector said, nor longer there remained.  
 But with swift foot his stately palace gained,  
 Yet — haply — found not there, more loved than life,  
 Her whom alone he sought, his beauteous wife.  
 She, with her babe and nurse, that mournful hour,



Watch'd, steep'd in tears, on Ilion's topmost tower  
 Then at the threshold, hastening to depart,  
 "Where" — Hector cried: — "the wife of Hector's heart?  
 Sought she some sister's anguish to restrain,  
 Or join'd the matrons at Minerva's fane?"  
 "None dares," the guardian of the house replied —  
 "None dares, thus charged, the truth from Hector hide," &c.

The excellence of Sotheby's second line awakens a hope soon to be disappointed. The omissions are as numerous and as bad as Pope's; the additions about as bad, though not so numerous.

#### MUNFORD.

This said the chief of heroes, Hector, thence  
 Departing, soon his splendid palace reach'd,  
 With rooms commodious; but he found not there  
 His white-armed princess, fair Andromache;  
 For with her child and maid, with graceful garb,  
 She stood in Ilion's tower, moaning sad,  
 Weeping and sighing. Finding not within  
 His blameless wife, he on his threshold stood,  
 And of his servants thus inquiry made:  
*Be quick*, and tell me truly, whither went  
 My lovely consort, fair Andromache?  
 To any of my sisters did she go,  
 Or brother's wives, or to Minerva's fane,  
 Where other Trojan dames with flowing hair,  
 That awful goddess by their prayers appease?  
 His household's faithful governess replied:  
 O Hector, since thou bidd'st me tell thee true,  
 To none of all thy sisters did she go,  
 Or brothers' wives, nor to Minerva's fane,  
 Where other Trojan dames with flowing hair,  
 That awful goddess by their prayers appease,  
 Particularly prosaic, throughout.

#### ELTON.

Straight to his roomy palace Hector came,  
 But found not in the mansion her he sought,  
 White-armed Andromache. She with her son  
 And her robed handmaid stood upon the tower,  
 Wailing with loud lament. But when in vain  
 He sought within her house his blameless wife,



Hector, advanced upon the threshold, stood  
 And to the damsels spake, "Now tell me true,  
 Ye damsels! whither from her home went forth  
 The fair Andromache? Say doth she seek  
 Her husband's sisters or her brethren's wives,  
 Or at Minerva's temple join the train  
 Of Trojan women who propitiate now  
 With offerings the tremendous Deity?"  
 The careful woman of the household then  
 Addressed reply: "To tell thee, Hector, truth,  
 As thou requirest, neither doth she seek  
 Her husband's sisters nor her brethren's wives,  
 Nor in Minerva's temple join the train  
 Of Trojan women who propitiate now  
 With offerings the tremendous Deity," &c.

As close a translation as could well be made, even  
 to the nice distinction between *εἰνατέρων* and *γαλόων*;  
 and as musical as Cowper's and Munford's are unmusical.

There is one couplet in Andromache's speech which  
 Sotheby has translated admirably. She has lost all her  
 kindred; Artemis slew her mother; Achilles her father  
 and brethren.

*Ἐκτορ ἀτάρ σύ μοι ἔσσι πατήρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ  
 ἥδὲ κασιγνητός, σὺ δέ μοι θαλερός παρακόιτης.*

"But thou, Hector, art to me father and lady mother,  
 and brother, and thou my blooming husband.

CHAPMAN.

Yet all these gone from me,  
 Thou amply renderest all; thy life makes still my father be;  
 My mother, brothers; and besides thou art my husband too.

POPE.

Yet while my Hector still survives I see  
 My father, mother, brethren, all in thee.

COWPER.

Yet Hector — oh my husband! I in thee  
 Find parents, brothers, all that I have lost.

ELTON.

Thou, Hector, art my father! thou to me  
 Art mother, brother, all my joy of life,  
 My husband!



## MUNFORD.

Yet Hector, thou alone art all to me,  
 Father and honor'd mother,

He thinks he has made a point by introducing *πότνια*,  
 and doesn't know what the word means.

Father and honor'd mother, brother too,  
 My husband dear and partner of my youth!

## SOTHEBY.

Yet thou, my Hector! thou art all, alone,  
 Sire, mother, brethren, husband, all in one.

There are some lines of Yriarte, "*Sin reglas de arte*," &c., which it might be ill-natured to quote in reference to Sotheby's success here.

Now let us leave earth for awhile and ascend to the

## GODS' COUNCIL.

*Ἡὼς μὲν κροκόπεπλος ἐκίδνατο πᾶσαν ἐπ' αἶαν. κ. τ. λ.*  
 (Lib. viii. 1—27.)

## LITERAL VERSION.

The saffron-robed morn was spreading over all the earth, when Zeus, the thunder-loving, held for himself an assembly of the Gods, on the highest summit of mannypeaked Olympus. He in person harangued them, and the Gods all listened attentively.

"Hear me, Gods and Goddesses all, while I speak what the spirit in my breast bids me. Therefore let no female nor any male divinity endeavor to infringe this my command, but do ye all together approve of it, that I may accomplish these actions as quickly as possible. That deity whom I recognize afar, willingly gone to assist either the Trojans or the Greeks, shall return to Olympus, indecorously beaten; or else I will seize and hurl him into gloomy Tartarus, very far off, where there is a gulf exceedingly deep under ground; where the gates are iron and the floor brass; as far below Hades, as heaven is above earth. Then shall ye know how much the strongest of all the Gods I am. But come now, try me, deities, that ye may all know. Let down a golden chain from heaven and do ye all, Gods and Goddesses, take hold of it: yet will ye not draw down from heaven to earth the supreme counsellor, Zeus; no, not though ye labor exceedingly. But when I too, on my part, shall be willing and eager to draw it, I will draw it up, earth, sea and all. Then will I bind the chain about the peak of Olympus, and all these things shall become suspended in air. So much am I superior to Gods and superior to men.



## CHAPMAN.

The cheerful lady of the light, deck'd in her saffron robe,  
Dispersed her beams through every part of this enflow-  
er'd globe,

When thundering Jove a court of gods, assembled by  
his will,

In top of all the topmost heights that crown th' Olym-  
pian hill.

He spake, and all the gods gave ear: Hear how I  
stand inclined,

That god nor goddess may attempt t' infringe my sover-  
eign mind:

But all give suffrage; that with speed I may these dis-  
cords end.

What god soever I shall find endeavor to defend

Or Troy or Greece, with wounds, to heaven he, shamed,  
shall reascend:

Or (taking him with his offence) I'll cast him down as deep  
As Tartarus, (the brood of night,) where Barathrum  
doth steep

Torment in his profoundest sinks: where is the floor of  
brass,

And gates of iron; the place, for depth, as far doth  
hell surpass

As heav'n, for height, exceeds the earth. Then shall  
he know from thence

How much my power, past all the gods, hath sovereign  
eminence.

Endanger it the whiles and see; let down our golden chain;  
And at it let all deities their utmost strength constrain,  
To draw me to the earth from heaven. You never shall  
prevail,

Though with your most contention, ye dare my state assail:  
But when my will shall be disposed to draw you all to me,  
Even with the earth itself, and seas, ye shall enforcéd be.  
Then will I to Olympus' top our virtuous engine bind,  
And by it everything shall hang, by my command inclined:  
So much I am supreme to gods; to men supreme as much.

Nobly translated, and very faithful. Almost the only  
deviations from the original, are the introduction of "en-  
flower'd," the beautiful expansion of *Ἡὼς* into "the cheer-  
ful lady of the light," and the substitution of "virtuous  
(powerful) engine," for "chain," (*σειρήν*.)



## POPE.

Aurora now, fair daughter of the dawn,  
 Sprinkled with rosy light the dewy lawn;  
 When Jove convened the senate of the skies,  
 Where high Olympus' cloudy tops arise.  
 The sire of Gods his awful silence broke,  
 The heavens attentive trembled as he spoke:  
 "Celestial states, immortal gods! give ear;  
 Hear our decree, and reverence what ye hear:  
 The fix'd decree, which not all heaven can move;  
 Thou, Fate! fulfill it; and, ye powers! approve!  
 What god but enters yon forbidden field,  
 Who yields assistance, or but wills to yield,  
 Back to the skies with shame he shall be driven,  
 Gash'd with dishonest wounds, the scorn of heaven;  
 Or far, oh far from steep Olympus thrown,  
 Low in the dark Tartarean gulf shall groan,  
 With burning chains fix'd to the brazen floors,  
 And lock'd by hell's inexorable doors;  
 As deep beneath the infernal centre hurl'd,  
 As from that centre to the ethereal world.  
 Let him who tempts me dread those dire abodes;  
 And know, the Almighty is the god of gods.  
 League all your forces, then, ye powers above,  
 Join all, and try the omnipotence of Jove:  
 Let down our golden everlasting chain,  
 Whose strong embrace holds heaven, and earth, and main:  
 Strive all, of mortal, and immortal birth,  
 To drag, by this, the Thunderer down to earth.  
 Ye strive in vain! If I but stretch this hand,  
 I heave the gods, the ocean, and the land;  
 I fix the chain to great Olympus' height,  
 And the vast world hangs trembling in my sight!  
 For such I reign, unbounded and above;  
 And such are men and gods compared to Jove."

"Dewy lawn" is weak in this context. The ninth and tenth lines are superfluous. The concluding couplets powerful. Why are the Goddesses left out? In Homer they occupy a conspicuous place.

## COWPER.

The saffron-mantled morning now was spread  
 O'er all the nations, when the thunderer Jove,



On the deep-fork'd Olympian's topmost height  
 Convened the gods in council, amid whom  
 He spake himself; they all attentive heard.  
 Gods! Goddesses! Inhabitants of heaven!  
 Attend; I make my secret purpose known.  
 Let neither god nor goddess interpose  
 My counsel to rescind, but with one heart  
 Approve it, that it reach, at once, its end.  
 Whom I shall mark soever from the rest  
 Withdrawn, that he may Greeks or Trojans aid,  
 Disgrace shall find him; shamefully chastised  
 He shall return to the Olympian heights,  
 Or I will hurl him deep into the gulphs  
 Of gloomy Tartarus, where hell shuts fast  
 Her iron gates and spreads her brazen floor,  
 As far below the shades, as earth from heaven.  
 There shall he learn how far I pass in might  
 All others; which if ye incline to doubt,  
 Now prove me. Let ye down the golden chain  
 From heaven, and at its nether links pull all  
 Both goddesses and gods. But me your King,  
 Supreme in wisdom, ye shall never draw  
 To earth from heaven, toil adverse as ye may.  
 Yet I, when once I shall be pleased to pull,  
 The earth itself, itself the sea, and you  
 Will lift with ease together, and will wind  
 The chain around the spiry summit sharp  
 Of the Olympian, that all things upheaved  
 Shall hang in the mid heaven. So far do I,  
 Compared with all who live, transcend them all.

Very nervous and remarkably close; sometimes even  
 too literal, *e. g.*, he misses the idiom in *αὐτῇ γαίῃ αὐτῇ  
 τε θάλασσῃ*.

#### SOTHEBY.

Morn, golden-robed, had earth illumed, when Jove  
 Convened in council all the powers above,  
 And on Olympus' many-mountained crest  
 The attentive synod of the gods address'd;  
 "Hear, all ye gods! ye, every goddess, hear  
 The word I speak, and what Jove speaks, revere.  
 Let none — 'tis vain — the will of Jove withstand  
 But all approve, so perfect my command,



Whoe'er, apart, what god may dare descend,  
 And heavenly aid to Greek or Trojan lend,  
 Shall by unseemly wounds on his return  
 The force and fury of my vengeance learn.  
 Or I will hurl him to Tartarean hell  
 Down the far depth where night and horror dwell,  
 The abyss that underneath dark Hades lies  
 Far as yon earth below the ethereal skies;  
 Profoundest gulf of ever during woes,  
 Where iron gates the brazen floor enclose —  
 There shall he know how far all gods above  
 The unimaginable might of Jove.  
 Gods! all your powers concentrate; try the proof;  
 Loose a gold chain from yon celestial roof,  
 There, all in counterpoise all heavenly birth  
 Strive from my throne to draw me down to earth.  
 Vain toil — while I at once uplift each god  
 With all the world of waves and man's abode:  
 Then round the Olympian crest the chain enwreath,  
 Centre of all above, around, beneath,  
 Where all sublimely poised at rest remains  
 While Jove's omnipotence the whole sustains.

"Morn, golden-robed had earth illumed," is as stiff  
 and bad a translation as could well be made. The em-  
 phatic conclusion of Zeus, "So much am I above," &c.,  
 is most infelicitously omitted. The matter intervening  
 between this unfortunate commencement and conclusion,  
 is not much better. The eighth line is hardly intelligible,  
 and the redundant construction in the ninth very awkward,  
 to say the least. "Shall learn on his return," is wrong.  
 Zeus did not intend to wait for the delinquent's return,  
 but meant to take summary vengeance on him.

#### MUNFORD.

Morn, saffron-robed, now shone o'er all the earth,  
 When Jove, rejoicing in his thunderbolts,  
 The gods assembled on the topmost height  
 Of all the summits of immense Olympus.  
 He spoke, and they with awful reverence heard;  
 Hear, all ye gods and all ye goddesses,  
 The sovereign mandate by my mind approved.  
 Let not a male or female deity  
 Attempt to contravene my sacred word,



But, all assenting, be it straight fulfill'd  
 If I shall any of the gods perceive  
 Withdrawing from the rest, with rash design  
 To give the Trojans or Achaians aid,  
 That god, with wounds disfigured, shall return,  
 Or headlong, by my forceful arm be hurl'd  
 To the deep gulf of gloomy Tartarus,  
 Where, far remote, beneath the ground descends  
 The dark abyss; a dungeon horrible,  
 With gates of iron and with floors of brass,  
 As far below e'en Hades as the space  
 Between earth's surface and the starry sky!  
 By proof then, shall he know, how far indeed  
 My matchless might surpasses all the gods.  
 But come, ye deities, if such your wish,  
 The trial make! Suspending from the skies  
 Our golden chain, let all the powers of heaven  
 Confederate, strive to drag me down to earth!  
 Yet never would your utmost labor move  
 The strength invincible of Jove supreme.  
 But when my sovereign will would draw that chain,  
 With ease I lift it, e'en with earth itself  
 And sea itself appended! Firmly then,  
 I bind it, round Olympus' cliff sublime,  
 And earth and ocean raise aloft in air!  
 So far do I both men and gods transcend!

This is *Cowper and water*.

The comparison of the Trojan watchfires to the stars on a clear night, introduces a brief and beautiful description of

#### MOONLIGHT.

‘Ως δ’ ὅτ’ ἐν οὐρανῷ ἄστρα. κ. τ. λ. (Lib. viii, 555-559.)

#### LITERAL VERSION.

As when in heaven around the brilliant moon the stars appear very conspicuous; when also the air is free from wind; all the cliffs and high headlands and valleys appear out: the immense mist\* breaks up from heaven: all the stars are seen, and the shepherd rejoices at heart.

---

\* αἰθήρη here has generally been taken for “sky,” whereby all the translators have stumbled. In Chapman’s first version we have -

“And lets a great sky out from heaven.”



## CHAPMAN.

As when about the silver moon, when air is free from wind,  
 And stars shine clear; to whose sweet beams, high prospects,  
 and the brows  
 Of all steep hills and pinnacles, thrust up themselves  
 for shows;  
 And even the lowly valleys joy, to glitter in their sight,  
 When the unmeasured firmament bursts to disclose her  
 light,  
 And all the signs in heaven are seen that glad the  
 shepherd's heart.

This is hardly to be surpassed for beauty and fidelity.  
 Yet many prefer the elaborate paraphrase of

## POPE.

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night!  
 O'er heaven's clear azure spreads her sacred light,  
 When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,  
 And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene;  
 Around her throne the vivid planets roll,  
 And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole,  
 O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,  
 And tip with silver every mountain's head;  
 Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,  
 A flood of glory bursts from all the skies;  
 The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,  
 Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.

Few passages in Pope are oftener quoted or more admired than this. Of its beauty as a description there can be no doubt. Its merits as a translation are another matter. Respecting them, we must "say ditto" to Elton.

"In the first line we are informed that the moon is 'the refulgent lamp of night.' 'Sacred,' in the second, is a cold, make-weight epithet, and adds no sensible image: 'the solemn scene' is general, where all should be local and particular: the simple reality of moonlight is impaired by the metaphor and personification in the words 'around her throne.' A flood of glory not only verges on bombast, but conveys nothing distinct: we receive no clear impression of the boundless firmament opening on the vision by the breaking of the mist overhead, nor of the multitude of stars that are taken in at once by the scope of sight; and the mountain shepherd looking up at the



moon from among his flocks, with a sudden sensation of cheeriness in his solitude, is displaced by a vulgar company, of swains *cycing* the blue vault and *blessing* the light because it is useful."

(Preface to the "*Specimens.*")

COWPER.

As when around the clear bright moon, the stars  
Shine in in full splendor, and the winds are hush'd,  
The groves, the mountain-tops, the headland-heights  
Stand all apparent, not a vapor streaks  
The boundless blue, but æther opened wide  
All glitters, and the shepherd's heart is cheer'd.

Simple and stately: but there is a redundancy in the "*clear bright moon.*" *Brilliant*, would be better; or even *shining*: this latter would preserve the resemblance between *φαινήν* and *φαίνετο* "In full splendor" is very good for *ἀριπρεπεία*.

ELTON.

As beautiful the stars shine out in heaven  
Around the splendid moon, no breath of wind  
Ruffling the blue calm æther; cleared from mist  
The beacon hill-tops, crags and forest dells  
Emerge in light; the immeasurable sky  
Breaks from above and opens on the gaze.  
The multitude of stars are seen at once  
Full sparkling, and the shepherd looking up  
Feels gladdened at his heart.

"*Splendid moon*" we don't like. "*Calm æther*" is superfluous. "*Beacon hilltops*" and "*forest-dells*" are legitimate expanisous to give the full force of *σκοπιαί* and *ράπαι*. The concluding lines are more diffuse than is Elton's wont.

SOTHEBY.

As when in heaven the stars at night's still noon  
Beam in their brightness round the fullorb'd moon,  
When sleeps the wind, and every mountain height,  
Rocks, cliffs and groves, shine towering up in light,  
And the vast firmament, immensely riven,  
Expands for other stars another heaven,  
Gladdening the shepherd's heart.



"At night's still noon," is no part of the original specification. The second couplet is a decided case of *anacoluthon*. The sonorousness of the third only makes its want of meaning more conspicuous.

## MUNFORD.

As when, in heaven, around the full orb'd moon  
Resplendent shine the stars, (the clear blue sky  
Unruffled by a breeze); when all the cliffs  
And mountain tops, and shadowy groves, though dark,  
Distinct appear; then, through the parting clouds,  
Unbounded æther bursts upon the view,  
And every star is seen; the shepherd's heart  
Rejoices at the sight  
Like Cowper he has given *both* translations of αἰὲς ἥρ to  
be sure of having the right one. The insertion "though  
dark" and the two parentheses are very stupid.

Now let us step over four books — nearly as long  
a stride as Poseidon's when he stalked down to Ægæe  
— and mount his chariot with him.

βῆ δ' ἐλάαν ἐπὶ κυματ', κ. ε. λ. (Lib. xiii. 27—31.)

## LITERALLY IN HEXAMETERS.

Over the waves he proceeded to drive; the whales un-  
derneath him  
Leaped on all sides from their pits, nor failed their king  
to acknowledge,  
While for delight asunder the sea stood: so they flew  
onward  
Rapidly, neither beneath was the brazen axletree wetted.  
So then his swift-springing steeds him bore to the ships  
of the Grecians.

## CHAPMAN.

And then the god begun  
To drive his chariot through the waves. From whirlpits  
every way  
The whales exulted under him, and knew their king;  
the sea  
For joy did open; and his horse so swift and lightly flew,  
*The under axletree of brass no drop of water drew;*  
And thus these deathless coursers brought their king to  
the Achive ships.



Glorious lines these. To be sure, *ἔνθαρον* does not mean "deathless."

## POPE.

He sits superior, and the chariot flies:  
His whirling wheels the glassy surface sweep;  
The enormous monsters, rolling o'er the deep,  
Gambol around him on the watery way;  
And heavy whales in awkward measures play.  
The sea subsiding spreads a level plain,  
Exults and owns the monarch of the main;  
The parting waves before his coursers fly:  
The wondering waters leave his axle dry.  
Pope is continually spoiling Homer's gold by trying to gild it. Hence the "glassy surface," "enormous monsters," "wondering waters," &c. The ideas of *subsiding* and *exulting* are not very consistent.

## COWPER.

He o'er the billows drove; the whales,  
Leaving their caverns, gambol'd on all sides  
Around him, not unconscious of their king;  
He swept the surge that tinged not as he pass'd  
His axle, and the sea parted for joy.  
His bounding coursers to the Grecian fleet  
Conveyed him swift.  
The rapid movement of the original is lost, as indeed it must be in any blank verse. "The sea part'd for joy" halts sadly.

## SOTHEY.

And onward urged his car  
That smoothly glided, while along the waves  
From the deep darkness of unfathomed caves  
Huge whales on every side with gamboling bound  
Leapt, conscious of their king, his steeds around,  
The sea with joy dividing smoothed the way  
Where 'mid the glassy main his passage lay.  
There as they flew, his steeds no brine upcast,  
Nor ocean bathed his axle as it passed.

## MUNFORD.

O'er ocean's waves the winged coursers flew;  
Huge whales unwiedly left their secret caves,



And joyfully around him gambol'd, all  
 Acknowledging their king, the gladsome sea,  
 Subsiding, gave him way; the coursers bore  
 So rapidly the smoothly-gliding car  
 That not a briny drop of billowy spray  
 Bedewed the whirling axle. To the ships  
 They bore their lord.

Two more attempts at improving on Homer by the use  
 of fine words. We now proceed to where

APHRODITE LENDS HER GIRDLE TO HERE, BY WHICH SHE  
 CAPTIVATES ZEUS.

Ἡ, καὶ ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἐλύσατο κεισὸν ἱμάτια, κ. τ. λ.  
 (Lib. xiv. 214-217—346-351.)

LITERAL VERSION.

She spake, and loosed from off her breasts her broidered, varied  
 band: in it were all her charms. In it was friendship, in it desire, in  
 it beguiling converse, that deceives men's minds, very wise though  
 they be.

\* \* \* \* \*

The son of Cronos spoke and clasped his wife in his arms.  
 Beneath them earth divine, caused-to-spring-up fresh verdant herbage,  
 dewy lotus and crocus and hyacinth, thick and soft, which lifted them  
 up from the ground. Amid this they lay down, and were girt by a  
 lovely golden cloud: bright dewes distilled from it.

CHAPMAN.

She answered: 'Tis not fit nor just thy will should be  
 denied,  
 Whom Jove in his embraces holds. This spoken, she  
 untied  
 And from her odorous bosom took her Ceston, in whose  
 sphere  
*Were all enticements to delight, all loves, all longings were,*  
 Kind conference, fair speech, whose power the wisest  
 doth inflame.

\* \* \* \* \*

This resolved, into his kind embrace  
 He took his wife; beneath them both fair Tellus strew'd  
 the place  
 With fresh-sprung herbs, so soft and thick, that up aloft  
 it bore



Their heavenly bodies : with his leaves did dewy lotus store  
 The Elysian mountain ; saffron flowers and hyacinths  
     help'd make  
 The sacred bed ; and there they slept ; when suddenly  
     there brake  
 A golden vapor out of air , whence shining dew's did fall.

## POPE.

She said. With awe divine the queen of love  
 Obey'd the sister and the wife of Jove ;  
 And from her fragrant breast the zone unbraced,  
 With various skill and high embroidery graced.  
 In this was every art, and every charm,  
 To win the wisest and the coldest warm :  
 Fond love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,  
 The kind deceit, the still reviving fire,  
*Persuasive speech, and more persuasive sighs,*  
*Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Gazing he spoke, and kindling at the view,  
 His eager arms around the goddess threw.  
 Glad Earth perceives, and from her bosom pours  
 Unbidden herbs and voluntary flowers ;  
 Thick newborn violets a soft carpet spread,  
 And clustering lotos swell the rising bed,  
 And sudden hyacinths the turf bestrow,  
 And flamy crocus made the mountain glow,  
 There golden clouds conceal'd the heavenly pair,  
 Steep'd in soft joys, and circumfused with air ;  
 Celestial dew's, descending o'er the ground,  
 Perfume the mount, and breathe ambrosia round.  
 This is one of the most favorable specimens of Pope ;  
 a beautiful imitation of a beautiful original. The additions are so gracefully expressed that it is impossible to find fault with them.

## COWPER.

So saying, the cincture from her breast she loosed  
 Embroider'd, various, her all-charming zone.  
 It was an ambush of sweet snares, replete  
 With love, desire, soft intercourse of hearts,  
 And music of resistless whisper'd sounds  
 That from the wisest steal their best resolves.



\* \* \* \*

So spake the son of Saturn, and his spouse  
 Fast lock'd within his arms. Beneath them earth  
 With sudden herbage teem'd; at once upsprang  
 The crocus soft, the lotus bathed in dew,  
 And the crisp hyacinth with clustering bells;  
 Thick was their growth, and high above the ground  
 Upbore them. On the flowery couch they lay,  
 Invested with a golden cloud that shed  
 Bright dew-drops all around.

This passage really seems to bring out our translators  
 in their full strength. These three versions, each in its  
 way, are most excellent. But alas! for

SOTHEY.

Then from her breast unclasp'd the embroider'd zone,  
 Where each embellishment divinely shone;  
 There dwell the allurements all that love inspire,  
 There soft seduction, there intense desire,  
 There witchery of words whose flatteries weave  
 Wiles that the wisdom of the wise deceive.

This is not so bad, but wait a moment.

He spake, and clasp'd his bride, the joyous earth  
 Burst into bloom of odoriferous birth;  
 There the blue hyacinth, gold crocus rose,  
 And the moist lotus oped its cup of snows;  
 There underneath them their soft broidery spread,  
 Swell'd gently up and formed their fragrant bed;  
 And as the gods lay there dissolved in love,  
 Resplendent dew-drops *gemm'd their gold alcove (!)*  
 This is rather too much. Zeus and Here in an *alcove!*  
 He should have put them into an *entresol* in the *Rue*  
*Richelieu* at once.

MUNFORD.

She said; and from her breast a zone unclasp'd,  
 Embroider'd rich with variegated dyes.  
 That girdle all her sweet enticing arts  
 Contain'd. There fondness dwelt, there tender looks,  
 Attractive, soothing speech, and flattery's charms,  
 Which steals the wits of wisest men away.

\* \* \* \*

The son of Saturn spake, and in his arms



His consort clasp'd. For them the sacred earth,  
 Spontaneous, herbage from her bosom pour'd,  
 With new-born flow'rets; lotus, dewy moist,  
 And ruddy saffron, purple hyacinth,  
 Thickly bestrew'd and soft, a fragrant bed,  
 Which, swelling, raised them high above the ground.  
 There they delighted lay, conceal'd within  
 A beauteous golden cloud, which glittering dew  
 Around them shed.

Who had some more passages marked to extract, but by this time the reader must be ready to unite with us in the question, *Why did Munford translate the Iliad, and why did his friends publish his translation?*

There are three men living who could translate Homer well, Elton, Tennyson and Aytoun; but the first is too old, the second too lazy, and the third too busy.

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## PHONICS AND PHONETICS.

Literary World, January 1848.

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*Comstock's Phonetic Reader.* Philadelphia: E. H. Butler & Co. 1847.

*Comstock's Phonetic Speaker.* Do. Do.

*Comstock's Phonetic Magazine.* Philadelphia: A. Comstock. 1847.

DR. COMSTOCK, or, as he spells himself *phonetically*, and doubtless prefers to be spelled, Dr. Komstok, proposes simply to alter and remodel the entire orthography of our language; and as a necessary means of carrying out this somewhat comprehensive and radical reform, he announces a *perfect* alphabet.

A perfect alphabet! When it is considered that perfection is predicable of few sublunary works, and that all existing alphabets are allowed to have some imperfections in the way of deficiency, redundancy, or incongruity of some sort, the announcement is not a little startling, and savors of something very like arrogance. But "to us much meditating" (as Brougham saith after



Cicero), another interpretation has occurred which renders the assertion less wonderful and more admissible. There is a popular use of the adjective *perfect* as an intensive epithet without involving the exact idea of freedom from imperfection. Thus, when particularly injured or annoyed by the stupidity of some not over-sagacious individual, we irately speak of him as "a perfect fool." Thus, Mr. Headley denominates a number of unfortunate deceased, "a perfect carpet of corpses." And thus, when we have occasion to show up some would-be scholar, poet, or philosopher, his friends are sure to cry out by way of irresistible vindication of him and confutation of ourselves, that he is "a perfect gentleman." We may then call Dr. Komstok's a perfect alphabet, meaning thereby, as we should say in common parlance, that it is "quite an alphabet," or "considerable of an alphabet," or as Punch's "fast man" would express it, "no end of an alphabet." And indeed this last phrase is not inappropriate to the "Phonetic Alphabet," considering its length. It comprises *forty-four* letters, thirty-eight "simple" and six "compounds." Of the simple letters, fifteen are vowels, including all the vowel and nearly all the *diphthongal* sounds of the language, viz. the four sounds of *a*, the ordinary long and short sounds of *e*, *i*, and *u*, the *oo* or continental *u* long (which Dr. K. classes with the sounds of *o*), the short sound of the same as in *full* (which he classes with the sounds of *u*) and the diphthong *ow* or *ou*. The consonants, divided into fourteen "subvowels" and nine "aspirates," are the established English consonants, *minus c* and *x*, with additional characters or new appropriations of old characters to represent *sh*, *ch*, *wh*, *ng*, the French *j*, and the sounds of *th*. Each letter has its distinct character, and five of the compound letters, *oi*, *j*, *ch*, *gs*, *x*, have characters compounded of the simple ones, expressing their component sounds. The sixth, *ai* in *fair*, has a character of its own. "All the consonants in the Anglo-American (alias the *Phonetic*) alphabet are sanctioned by English, French, Greek, or Gothic usage." For instance, *c* represents the sound of *sh*, because (we are not answerable for the logic here) *ch* in French has the same sound.

There are some obvious objections to the theoretical construction of this alphabet. Thus we may ask, why



is *oi* to be considered a compound letter and *ou* a simple one? The former, is as Dr. K. properly enough states, composed of the sounds *aw*, *ee*; is not the latter as clearly composed of the sounds *ah*, *oo*? Does not the power of the diphthong *au* in Spanish, Italian, and German, confirm this? Nay more, are not the sounds of *i* and *u* long diphthongal sounds quite as much as *oi*, and do they not exist as diphthongs in the continental languages? And how is *ai* in *fair* to be made out a diphthong? Dr. K. says, it is compounded of a *long* and *u short* and he makes *lair* and *layer* equivalent sounds. Now, with all submission, it strikes us that *layer* is decidedly a *dissyllable* with the sound of the consonant *y* distinctly appreciable in it. As to the supposed distinction between *ui* in *fair* and *a* in *fate*, we have said enough on that point lately. Our more immediate concern, however, is with the practical applicability of the alphabet. Of course, the first obstacle which meets us *in limine* is, that it is no joke to ask a whole people to unlearn their letters and learn them over again. To this Dr. K. replies, that the perfection of his alphabet enables any one to learn it in an hour; and there is a case adduced of a wonderful "phonic girl in Michigan," who did so. Now, we do not profess to be "phonic" ourselves (not clearly understanding what it means, but like the little boy in the story who was called a philosopher, we "hope it's nothing bad"), and that may make some difference, but we have studied the type of the Phonetic Magazine much more than an hour (more we confess to decipher some specimens of Cherokee and other curious tongues which we found in it, than with any intention of adopting the Komstokography) and are yet far from being able to read it with fluency. One constant source of confusion is, that familiar characters have new sounds affixed to them. Thus *e* represents long *a*; *c*, *sh*; *z*, the French *j*, and so on. With the *written* alphabet it is still worse; different forms of the same letter (according to the present system) are made to stand for different sounds, and sounds as different in some cases as *e* and *x*; some of the characters very nearly resemble each other; and, indeed, the *Phonetic* written alphabet seems to us nearly as inconvenient as the German — and what that is, any one who has learned, or tried to learn to *write*



German, can testify. Again, there are cases in which the proposed spelling is contrary not merely to habit, but to the very genius and theory of the language. It is one of the most striking peculiarities of English pronunciation that *e final* is mute, and that this mute *e final* when preceded by a single consonant lengthens the vowel preceding that consonant which would otherwise be short. To write the words *mule*, *mite*, as Dr. K. proposes, *met*, *mit*, is not merely foreign, but absolutely repugnant to the idea of every one who has at all examined the principles of his own language.

The next obvious objection is that the new system would throw out all the printed books now in existence, so that, unless reprinted, they would be lost to future generations. To this Dr. K. answers that we must reflect that "the English tongue has been racked by periodical changes in spelling, which appear to have been founded not upon phonology, but upon caprice. By these fluctuations in orthography, many words have been repeatedly rendered unintelligible, and consequently useless, until reprinted in a new spelling." (So the remedy for this is to render *all* works "unintelligible, and consequently useless," until, &c.) and he then proceeds to argue from sundry examples (very ingeniously and plausibly selected, we admit), that the changes which the language has undergone, are chiefly in *spelling*, those in *pronunciation* being very slight, so that "the New Alphabet is *restoring*, not *destroying* the language." If any one wishes to know how far this will hold water, let him recall to mind the first two couplets of Chaucer; or, without going so far back, recollect how *ocean* was pronounced by Milton, and *Rome* by Shakspeare. But so far is Dr. K. from being moved by any of these things, that he is preparing to adapt his "phonetic alphabet" to the European languages, beginning with the French; and one of the numbers of his magazine contains an "*Avis aux Français*," on the matter, which we sincerely hope may some day meet the eye of the *Charivari*. And certainly his plan derives some encouragement from that most erroneous popular idea which makes *education* to consist in cramming the mind with facts, not in disciplining it to use the facts it meets with, and therefore seeks to dispense with or abridge as much as possible all preparatory steps.



We have an excellent specimen of this in a Mr. O. Wheelock,\* who writes thus to the editor of the Phonetic Magazine.

“DEAR SIR: —

I have examined the last Number of your monthly Magazine, and I take the liberty to say that I heartily approve of your Phonetic Alphabet — the more so on account of the perplexity I have experienced in spelling, both in learning and teaching; for I have ever considered the spelling of a class of pupils a mere game of haphazard, and have often felt the necessity of some such system, long before I ever heard of yours. Of the 85,000 words in our language, only about 60, I think, are spelled strictly according to their sound — nearly 85,000 separate impressions are to be stamped upon the memory before he can spell perfectly the English language! This it takes him [*whom?*] a lifetime to accomplish [*! !*] to the neglect of the more useful branches. Were a person required to remember the names of 85,000 plants, the task would be thought too great for the mind to accomplish; still how much greater the task to learn and remember the exact position of all the letters of 85,000 words! [*How exactly parallel the two cases are!*] Yet should a man make pretension to an education, and spell one word wrong, he would subject himself to ridicule.”

Of course the next step after the Perfect Alphabet will be a Perfect Grammar, with no irregular inflections, or exceptions to any of its rules. Such a scheme, indeed, is quite as sensible in theory and as feasible in practice, as that of the New Alphabet.

It will help us to form an idea of the practicability of establishing a universal alphabet, if we look at another uniformity which, though involving far less difficulty, has never yet been attained — we mean a uniform pronunciation of the ancient languages. In this respect, the literary world has made no progress since the time of Erasmus: the Englishman who speaks Latin is unintelligible to the German; the German who speaks Latin is ridiculous to the Frenchman. Even *in our own country* it has not been possible to bring about this uniformity — Greek is still pronounced one way in New York and another in Boston. We remember that some years ago there was a congress of professors held here to take

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\* So ignorant is this gentleman of the principles of our language, that he is actually at a loss for a rule to determine the sound of *a* in *male*.



into consideration this very matter. Various schemes were proposed. There was much talk about the modern Greek system. Professor Woolsey informed the conclave (whether in real or ironical recommendation, or whether simply *as* a piece of information, we will not pretend to say) that this was the pronunciation of the uncient Boeotians; and at length the grave assembly broke up decidedly *re infecta*.

But let us suppose the Phonetic system established as the standard orthography of the English language: is it certain that it would put an end to all the difficulties, of the subject, and that it would render mispronunciation impossible — a point on which Dr. K. is particularly sanguine? Here, again, an analogy from experience will afford us some aid. The Spanish alphabet is remarkably simple, having but one silent letter,\* and two letters with different sounds; but we have yet to learn that it is a phenomenon to find a Spaniard who spells or pronounces incorrectly, or that the Spanish language is particularly free from dialects and local peculiarities. We may be sure that those sturdy democrats of language who find the ordinary rules of orthography too grievous a burden, would not long submit even to the rules of Dr. K. The mere desire to distinguish between words pronounced alike, such as *fair* and *fare*, which the "Phonetic" system completely confounds (this is an objection, and a very serious one, which seems never to have occurred to the "Phonologists"), would introduce some variation. Again there are words as to the pronunciation of which the best authorities differ (e. g. *either* and *neither*),† and others in which the American usage differs from the English (e. g. all words beginning with *wh*). How can this fail to introduce a diversity? — unless Dr. K. is to be the sole arbiter of pronunciation as well as spelling. Were this new orthography established, it would soon degenerate into general license: one man's "system" would

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\* The Spanish *h* affords a striking exemplification of the occasional value of those silent letters which our Phonetic reformers so contemptuously reject. Though of no use at all in pronunciation, it is of great importance to the philologist as it represents the Latin *f*, *facis*, *hacer*, *filius*, *hijo*, &c.

† "Do you say *either* or *œther*?" some one asked Dr. Johnson. "*Nayther*!" replied the Lexicographer.



be confusion to his neighbors. Probably every one of our readers can furnish from his own experience some instance of amusing perplexity caused him by a practical "phonographer" — for phonographers were living before Dr. Komstok, though generally in very humble walks of life. The story of Dr. Franklin's chambermaid\* is well known. We have heard one nearly as good. Some ship-owners during the last war received a letter from their Captain, whose literary abilities were not quite equal to his nautical. After passing through various "Phonetic" spellings, such as *bloked* for *blockade*, they were at length brought to a full stop by the occurrence of the word *wig*, in a place where it could not possibly be made to harmonize with the context. As a last resort an old tar who had more than once sailed under the captain was summoned. Jack glanced at the hieroglyphic, and instantly interpreted thus, "Its all plain enough, Cap'n says as how the *wyge* (voyage) 'Il be a good one after all."

Indeed the "Phonetic Reformers" are already disagreeing among themselves. We see in the Phonetic Magazine much thunder launched against one Pitman, an Englishman, who uses some characters "like those on a tea-chest" (misled perhaps by some fancied etymological connexion between *teachest* and *teacher*), and others "like Apothecaries' drams and scruples" (Dr. K. has no scruples about *his* alphabet). There is also a paper published in this city called the *Anglo-Sacsun*, on yet another different system of "Phonotypy," which publishes a list of 150 teachers of, and lecturers on "the true system of spelling words — that is, just as they are pronounced." We are uncharitable enough to doubt whether all these teachers and lecturers believe in their own *graphy* and *typy*, whatever it may be, and whether some of them are not speculating on the public avidity for new hobbies and delusions. Of Dr. K. himmself, we would not wil-

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\* Franklin is claimed as the parent of "Phonography," and thus spoken of in the Phonetic Magazine:

"His facetiousness and reputation set that Phonetic spirit in action which has now reached its perfection in form through the genius of Dr. Andrew Comstock."

*Chapeau bas! Chapeau bas!*  
*Gloire au Marquis de Carabas!*



lingly suppose anything harsh, especially after the flattering things he has said of our "tight little island," respecting which he states poetically (for the Doctor is a poet no less than a philosopher), that

"Manhattan is an isle,  
Where talent is spontaneous;  
Where people freely write  
Their pieces miscellaneous."

Of him then, and of all sincere believers in "Phonotypy," we cannot take leave better than in the words of Thucydides. "We bless their innocence, but do not envy their simplicity."

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## THE PROSE WRITINGS OF ANDRE CHENIER.\*

American Review, January 1848.

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EVERY one at all conversant with French literature has heard of the young poet, who "struck his lyre at the foot of the scaffold," and whose last verses were interrupted by the summons of the executioner. It is not so generally known that this man was one of the most vigorous, independent, and sagacious prose writers of the exciting period at which he lived. The first feeling on reading his political essays is one of surprise, that writers on the French Revolution should have alluded to him only as the poet — or rather the youth who *would have been* a poet, had he not perished so young. Even *his cousin*, M. Thiers, while going so far as to call him a *distinguished* poet, † makes not the least mention of his controversial writings.

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\* Œuvres en Prose d'Andre Chenier. Paris: Charles Gosselin. 1840.

† "Dans le nombre etaient deux poetes celebres, Roucher, l'auteur des *Mois*, et le jeune Andre Chernier, qui laissa d'admirables ebauches."  
— Thiers, *Revolutions Française*, vi. 200.



Now in this we are persuaded that Chénier has not been fairly treated. His poetry, rough and fragmentary as most of it is, does not put him very high on Parnassus — even the Gallic Parnassus. His longer productions are principally imitations of the classics; and everybody knows what French imitations of the classics are, and that they resemble the Greek originals about as much as the domestic madonnas, so common in a certain city of this Union, do the Raphaels at Florence. To our mind the man who could translate

*ἀλλήλαις λαλεῦνται τέον γάμον αἱ κυπάρισσαι,*

C'est ce bois qui de joie et s'agite et murmure,

had fallen very far short of the spirit of Theocritus. In shorter pieces, (such as his stanzas to Fanny, and other erotics,) where he had, partially at least, escaped from the influence of his classic pseudo-models, there is more poetic fire. But even his last and best known verses,

"Comme un dernier rayon, comme un dernier zéphyre," &c.,

owe their celebrity more to the unexampled circumstances under which they were written, than to any intrinsic merit. And, generally, his "rough sketches," (*ébauches*), as Thiers appropriately calls them, have been praised by his compatriots, chiefly for the *promise* they gave, as if, to use his own dying words, he "had something in his head," which would have come out with more time and opportunity. Now this sort of reputation is, we repeat it, very far below Chénier's deserts. And we would vindicate for him, not the vague and doubtful renown of a *possible* poet, but the real and tangible character of an excellent political writer, with a strong and clear style, an indomitable spirit of independence, and a sagacity which, considering the circumstances in which he was placed, is but faintly depicted by the epithet extraordinary. Before proceeding to justify this claim of ours in detail, we will mention two facts which may, at any rate, tend to gain us a hearing. It was André Chénier whom the conservative secession from the Jacobin Club, selected to prepare their manifesto and profession of faith. It was André Chénier who composed that letter in which the unfortunate Louis XVI. made his last appeal to the people.



Louis Chénier, a French consul, married a Greek beauty. His third son, Andre, was born at Constantinople, in 1762. Sent to France in his infancy, and liberally educated, he entered the army, and at the age of twenty was in quarters at Strasburg as a sub-lieutenant. A soldier's life, in time of peace, is particularly unsatisfactory to an active and ambitious young man. In six months Andre quitted his profession forever, and returned to Paris. There he began to study *furiously*. He seems to have proposed for himself what Chatham is said to have proposed for his son, "to learn the whole Cyclopædia." As is usual in such cases, he read himself nearly to death. His health was partially restored by a journey in Switzerland, during which he made some efforts to commit his impressions to paper; but his enthusiasm was too buoyant to be thus fixed, and he had not sufficient command over his own feelings. Next he went to England, in the suite of the ambassador, (the Count of Lucerne,) a very likely way of taming any excess of spirits. With England he was displeased, as most foreigners, and especially most Frenchmen, may well be on short acquaintance. Yet his penetrating mind fully appreciated the strong common sense of the English people; and the contrast which he subsequently drew between the political clubs of London and those of Paris, was not at all flattering to his countrymen.

It was not till 1790 that he established himself at Paris, and applied himself seriously to poetic composition. The state of public affairs soon turned his talents in another direction. The *Friends of the Constitution*, afterwards so formidable as the *Jacobins*, had in their progress towards anarchy, eliminated from themselves a number of moderate men, among whom were De Pange and Condorcet. The result was the *Society of 1789*, a society whose object was pretty well indicated by its title. Chénier joined these men, and to him as the best or boldest, or both, of their writers, was the task assigned of putting forth an official statement of their principles, of "defining their position," as our phrase is. This he did in an essay on the momentous question, "*Who are the real enemies of the French?*" He begins with a graphic sketch of the condition of France at that time: —



"When a great nation, after having grown gray in careless error, wearied at length of evils and oppression, wakes from this long lethargy, and by a just and lawful insurrection enters upon all its rights, and overturns the order of things which violated all those rights, it cannot in an instant find itself calmly established in its new condition. The strong impulse given to so weighty a mass, makes it vacillate for some time before it can recover its equilibrium. After all that is bad has been destroyed, and those charged with the execution of reforms are pursuing their work in haste, we must not hope that a people still heated with emotion, and exalted by success, can stay quiet and wait peaceably for the new government that is preparing for them. All imagine they have acquired the right of co-operating in the government, and demand the exercise of that right with an unreasonable impatience. Every one wishes, not merely to assist and protect, but even to preside over a part, at least, of the fabric; and as the general interest of these partial reforms is not so striking to the multitude, their unanimity is less thorough and active. The number of feet retards the general progress; the number of arms the general action.

"In this state of uncertainty, politics take hold of every mind. All other labors are suspended; all the old-fashioned kinds of industry are banished; men's heads are heated; they originate ideas, or think they originate them; they pursue them; they see nothing else; the patriots who at first made but one body, because they looked to but one end, begin to discover differences, in most cases imaginary, among themselves; every one labors and struggles; every one wishes to show himself; every one would carry the flag; every one in his principles, his speeches, his actions, wishes to go beyond all others.

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"These agitations, provided that a new order of things, wisely and *promptly* established, does not give them time to go too far, may not be injurious, nay, may turn out a public benefit, by exciting a sort of patriotic emulation; and if while all this is going on, the nation is enlightening and fashioning itself by really liberal principles; if the representatives of the people are not interrupted in the work of forming a constitution; and if the whole political machine is tending towards a good government, all these trifling inconveniences will vanish of themselves, and there is no cause for alarm. But if we see that, for from disappearing, the germs of political hatred are taking deeper root; if we see grave accusations and atrocious imputations multiplied at random; if we see everywhere a false spirit and false principles working blindly, as if by some fatality, in the most numerous class of citizens; if we see at the same moment in every corner of the empire illegal insurrections brought on in the same manner, founded on the same misapprehensions, defended by the same



sophistries; if we see frequent appearances in arms on the part of that lowest class of the people, who understanding nothing, having nothing, possessing no interest in anything, can only sell themselves to whoever will buy them; then such symptoms must be alarming."

Here was enough to fix upon Chénier the fatal enmity of the Jacobins. What, the "poor and virtuous people" that Robespierre delighted to prate about, ready to "sell themselves to whoever would buy them!" The young conservative was a doomed man adready.

He goes on to say that such a deplorable state of things must be owing to the machinations of some public enemies? Not the Austrians, fatigued and exhausted by their own wars; nor the English, "that nation about which the Parisians talk so much and know so little;" \* nor yet the emigrants. These last have been influenced by fear, prejudice and ignorance. The surest way to bring them back and make them good citizens is to present such a spectacle of order and tranquillity as will show them that their fears and prejudices are unfounded. But even admitting their hostility, what can such a faction accomplish if the State is united? And this leads to the first conclusion, that the real public enemies are *those causes which prevent the re-establishment of public tranquillity*. Now what are these causes? "Everything that has been done in this revolution, good or bad, is owing to *writings*: in them, perhaps, then, we shall find the source of the evils that threaten us." And, accordingly, he proceeds to show that these *public enemies* are the *encouragers and apologists of popular excesses*. After a hasty summary of these excesses, he exclaims, with a natural and virtuous indignation — "And to think that there are writers blood-thirsty or cowardly enough to come forward as the protectors and excusers of these murders! That they dare to abet them! That they dare to point out this and that victim! That they have the audacity to give the name of *popular justice* to these horrible violations of all justice and all law! To be sure, the power of hanging, like all other powers, is ultimately referable to the people, but it is a frightful thing, if this is the only power which they are not willing to exercise by their representatives."

Then follow several pages of just and powerful in-

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\* Equally true this, at the present day.



vective against "those people to whom all law is burdensome, all restraint insupportable, all rule odious; people for whom an honest life is the most oppressive of yokes! They hated the old government, not because it was bad but because it was a government; they will hate the new; they will hate all, whatever be their nature." How accurately Chénier foresaw what would be the consequence of giving in to these people may be seen from the following extract: —

"Now, as I was saying, is it not evident that, on the one hand, the workmen and day-laborers of every class, who only live by constant and steady work, abandoning themselves to this turbulent indolence, will no longer be able to gain a subsistence, and before long, stimulated by hunger, and the rage which hunger inspires, will only think of seeking for money wherever they imagine it may be found? On the other hand, it is hardly necessary to say that the farms and workshops thus abandoned will cease to be capable of supplying that income of individuals which alone makes the public income. No more taxes then; consequently no more public service; consequently the upper classes reduced to misery and despair; the army disbanded and pillaging the country; the infamy of a national bankruptcy accomplished and declared; the citizens all in arms against each other. No more taxes; consequently no more government; the National Assembly obliged to abandon its task, and put to flight; universal slaughter and conflagration; provinces towns, and individuals mutually accusing one another of their common disasters; France torn to pieces by the convulsions of this incendiary anarchy."

There was no want of respectable persons to laugh at these alarms and pity the alarmists. Chénier has a word for these:

"I should like these persons, for our entire satisfaction, to deign to take pen in hand, and prove that these fermentations, these tempests, these continued pangs, have not the tendency which I attributed to them; that they do not produce a spirit of insubordination and want of discipline; or, if they please, that this spirit is no the most formidable enemy of law and liberty. I should like them also to show us what will become of France, if the bulk of the French people, wearied of their own indiscretions and the anarchy resulting from them, wearied of never arriving at the goal which they have themselves continually put further off, should come to believe that liberty is only to be found in disgust of liberty, and, as the remembrance of former evils is readily effaced, should end by regretting their old yoke of quiet degradation."

He proceeds to draw an important distinction: —



"These same persons are never tired of repeating to us that things are preserved by the same means which have acquired them. If by this they mean that courage, activity and union are as necessary to preserve liberty as to win it, nothing is more incontrovertible or more irrelevant; but if they understand that in both cases this courage, and activity, and union, are to manifest themselves in the same way and by the same actions, they are very much mistaken. The very contrary is the truth, for in destroying and overthrowing a colossal and unjust power, the more ardent and headlong our courage the more certain our success. But afterwards, when our ground is cleared and we have to rebuild on extensive and durable foundations, when we must make after having unmade, then our courage should be the very reverse of what it was at first. It should be calm, prudent and deliberate; it should manifest itself only in wisdom, tenacity and patience; it should fear to resemble those torrents which ravage without fertilizing. Hence it follows that the means which accomplished the Revolution, if they continue to be employed without addition or qualification, can only destroy its efficiency by hindering the constitution from being established. Hence again it follows that those wild pamphleteers, those unruly demagogues, who, enemies, as we have seen, of all government and all restraint, thundered against old abuses at the beginning of the Revolution, were then right enough,\* for they found themselves for the moment united with all honest men in proclaiming the truths which have made us free; but that now they ought not to claim our confidence as a debt, or accuse our want of attention as a want of gratitude, while in using the same expressions and the same declamations against an absolutely new order of things, they are preaching an entirely different doctrine, which would conduct us to a different end.

What remedies and safeguards are to be adopted? Popular errors are apt to arise from ignorance, rather than deliberate wickedness. The real principles of civil liberty must be carefully inculcated. Here are some of the things which every citizen ought to know and feel:—

"That there can be no happiness and freedom in society without government and public order.

"That there can be no private wealth, unless the public revenue, or in other words, the public wealth, is secure.

"That the public wealth cannot be secure without public order.

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\* An application of the same principle explains what has puzzled some good men — how Protestants may consistently join with skeptics in opposing the abuses of the Romish Church, where Romanism is the prevailing religion.



"That, while in despotic states a blind obedience to the caprices of despots is called public order, under a free constitution founded on the national sovereignty, public order is the only safeguard of persons and property, the only support of the constitution.

"That there is no constitution, unless all the citizens are freed from every illegal restraint, and cordially united to bear the yoke of the law — a yoke always light when all bear it equally.

"That every respectable nation respects itself.

"That every nation which respects itself respects its own laws and magistrates.

"That there is no liberty without law.

"That there is no law if one part of society, be it the majority or not, can forcibly assail and attempt to overthrow the former general wish which has made a law, without waiting for the times and observing the forms indicated by the constitution.

"That, when the constitution gives a legal way of reforming a law which experience has shown to be faulty, insurrection against a law is the greatest crime of which a citizen can be guilty; for he thereby dissolves society so far as in him lies, and this is the real crime of treason.

"That there is no liberty if all do not obey the law, and if any one is obliged to obey anything except the law and its agents.

"That no one ought to be arrested, searched, examined, judged, or punished, except according to law and by the agents of the law.

"That the law is only applicable to actions, and that all inquisitions upon opinions and thoughts are no less violations of liberty when exercised in the name of the people, than when exercised in the name of tyrants."

If these brief sentences had been written at the present day; if they had appeared, for instance, in an article of the *Courier and Enquirer*, or our own Review, against the anti-renters, while it could not be denied that they expressed sound political views in a bold and forcible manner, it might be said that they contained nothing very striking or remarkable, but were only a succinct and vigorous statement of what all honest and sane men believed. But composed, as they were, at a period when of the two great experiments whence we derive most of our political experience, the one was just beginning and the other had not had time to work; a period when the majority of reformers and philosophers thought with Jefferson, that "the old system of government had been tried long enough," and the only escape from it was to rush into the opposite extreme of no



government at all except the temporary will of an occasional majority, they denote uncommon sagacity and foresight, and prove that Chénier had the head of a statesman no less than the heart of a patriot. Most particularly worthy of notice is the clearness of his financial views, and the accuracy with which he traced the connection between private and public wealth. It was then a favorite delusion, that the nation might be bankrupt without affecting the fortunes of individuals. The great hero and apostle of democratic despotism who rose out of the Revolution, fell into the contrary error of supposing that the public treasury might continue to be recruited by the appropriation of private capital, not seeing that, to use an ancient but apposite illustration, he was thus killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. It was reserved for a still more modern democracy to invent a still wiser and honester financial expedient — that of repudiating the obligations, while they enjoy the acquisitions, of past generations.

The *AVIS aux Français* made a great sensation, which was not confined to France. Two circumstances will show the extent and force of its influence. The Polish king Stanislaus Augustus, caused it to be translated into his language, and sent a token of his esteem to the author, who returned a letter of thanks: of course, the friends of the Constitution were still more amiably disposed to him, after this royal correspondence. And Condorcet, finding that he could no longer take the lead in the Society of 1789, broke up that association so far as lay in his power, and went straight over to the Jacobins. Chenier's reputation emboldened him to present himself in the following year, (1791,) as a candidate for the assembly; but, as might have been predicted of a man so independent and so much beyond his age, he was unsuccessful. After this he continued to attack and expose the Jacobins in the *Journal de Paris*, a paper professedly neutral, and publishing communications on any side as paid advertisements, but edited by men of a conservative leaning. The Jacobins were not slow to answer their bold assailant. They set upon him *his own brother*, Marie Joseph, the youngest of the four, who had by some means been inveigled into their ranks. The discussion, which lasted several months and was only broken off at



the urgent entreaties of the rest of the family, displayed at the outset, but did not long preserve, the moderation and delicacy demanded by the uncommon position of the parties. The two brothers all but O'Connellized each other. They applied to each other's writings the epithet of *infamous*, then a pet word in the vocabulary of the French journalists, and more usually merited than such pet words generally are. How Joseph Chenier came to take sides with the Jacobins, is not perfectly clear. It seems probable that they flattered his vanity, and made him half believe that his brothers' opposition was attributable to envy and jealousy. For when most angry with Andre, his bitterest taunt is to remind him of the election for deputies. A very young man among Democrats may be pardoned for supposing that office and honor are synonymous, and not reflecting that where merit is no longer the test of advancement, the correlative mentioned by Sallust is unavoidable.\*

If, however, the leading Jacobins supposed, that by getting up this personal issue they had succeeded in diverting or weakening Andre Chenier's attacks upon them, they were very much mistaken. In the winter of 1792, an event occurred, which, by eminently exposing them to his ridicule, specially marked him out for their vengeance. Two years before, a Swiss regiment had been condemned to the galleys for mutiny. Their offences were gross and unequivocal: they had refused to swear to the Constitution, plundered the regimental chest, and fired upon the National Guard. But General Bouillé, against whom they then revolted, had now proved a traitor to the popular cause. In a fit of childish spite against him, the Swiss were pardoned; on motion of Collot d'Herbois, the amnesty was changed into a triumph; a fête was given to the liberated culprits, and Pétion, as mayor of Paris, presided at it. The intense absurdity of the affair threw into the shade its injustice and danger; and Chenier was not the man to let any of this absurdity be lost. He satirized and ridiculed the Jacobins in prose and verse. He sketched a plan for the new ovation: —

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\* "Verum ex his magistratus et imperia, postremo omnis cura rerum publicarum minime mihi hac tempestate cupiunda videntur quoniam neque virtuti honos datur, neque illi quibus per fraudem is fuit, utique tuti aut eo magis honesti sunt" — Sallust, Bell. Jug., Cap. 8.



"The Romans used to engrave on brass the names of these generals to whom they granted a triumph, and their titles to so great an honor. I suppose the city of Paris will follow this example, and the happy witnesses of the triumphal entry will read inscribed on the car of victory:

"For having revolted with arms in their hands, and replied to the reading of the National Assembly's decree which recalled them to their duty, 'that they persisted in their revolt;'

"For having been declared *guilty of high treason* by a decree of the National Assembly, Aug. 16, 1790;

"For having plundered the regimental chest;

"For having spoken these memorable words: *We are not Frenchmen; we are Swiss; we must have money;*

"For having fired upon the National Guards of Metz and other places, who marched to Nancy in accordance with the decrees of the National Assembly."

And he proceeds, with unanswerable irony:—

"General Bouillé deceived all France and its representatives. None but these Swiss soldiers penetrated his bad designs. They saw that he would take the first opportunity to become a perjured traitor, Accordingly they took up arms against him, and made sure of the regimental chest, for fear this money, falling into his less patriotic hands, should serve the purposes of the counter-revolutionists.

"Since General Bouillé has shown himself a cowardly and treacherous enemy of his country, it is clear that those who fired on him, and on the French citizens marching under his orders by virtue of a decree of the National Assembly, cannot but be excellent patriots.

"In every criminal case there can be but one culpable party. For example, when a murdered man is proved to have been a rogue, it is evident that his murderer must be an honest man."

The only reply Collet d'Herbois and his myrmidons could make, was to charge Chénier with being hired by the Court, and to threaten him with assassination — two excellent radical arguments.

Chénier had already drawn a portrait of the Jacobin Club, too faithful not to provoke their fiercest indignation. This sketch was published in the supplement to the *Journal de Paris*, February 26, 1792, just a month before the letter from which we have been quoting:—

"There exists in the midst of Paris a numerous association, holding frequent meetings, open to all who are, or pretend to be, patriots, always governed by leaders visible or invisible, who are continually changing and mutually destroying one another, but who have always the same object—the supreme power; and the same in-



tion—to get that power by whatever means. This society, formed at a moment when liberal principles, though sure to triumph, were not yet completely established, necessarily attracted a great number of citizens who were filled with alarm and warmly attached to the good cause. Many of these had more zeal than knowledge. With them glided in many hypocrites; so did many people who were in debt, without industry, poor through their own indolence, and seeking something to hope for in any change. Many wise and just men who know that in a well regulated State all the citizens do not attend to public affairs, while all ought to attend to their private affairs, have since retired from it; whence it follows that this association must be chiefly composed of some skilful players, who arrange the cards and profit by them, of some subordinate intriguers with whom an habitual eagerness for mischief takes the place of talent, and a large number of idlers, honest, but ignorant and short-sighted, incapable of any bad intention themselves, but very capable of forwarding the bad intentions of others without knowing it.

"This society has generated an infinity of others; towns, boroughs, and villages are full of them. They are almost all under the orders of the parent society, with which they keep up a most active correspondence. It is a body in Paris and the head of a larger body extending over France. In the same way did the Church of Rome *plant the faith*, and govern the world by its congregations of monks.

"This system was imagined and executed two years ago by men of great popularity, who saw very well that it was means of increasing their power and preserving their popularity, but did not see how perilous an instrument it was. So long as they ruled these societies, all the errors there committed met their warmest approbation; but since they have been blown up by this mine of their own kindling, they detest the excesses which are no longer to their profit, and, talking more truth without possessing more wisdom, combine with honest men in cursing their old master-piece.

"The audience before which these societies deliberate, constitutes, their strength; and when one considers that men of business do not neglect their affairs to listen at the debates of a club, and that men of intelligence prefer the silence of the closet, or the peaceable conversation, to the tumult and clamors of these noisy crowds, it is easy to see what must be the ordinary composition of the audience, and further, what sort of language is the best recommendation to them. One simple fallacy is all-sufficient: the constitution being founded on that eternal truth, *the sovereignty of the people*, it is only necessary to persuade the listeners at the club that they are *the people*.

"Lecturers and journal-mongers have generally adopted this definition. Some hundred vagabonds collected in a garden or at a play, or some gangs of robbers and shop-lifters, are impudently de-



nominated *the people*; and never did the most wanton despot receive from the most eager courtier adoration so vile and disgusting, as the base flattery with which two or three thousand usurpers of the national sovereignty are every day intoxicated — thanks to the writers and speakers of these societies!

"As the semblance of patriotism is the only profitable virtue, some men who have been stigmatized by their disgraceful lives run to the club to get a reputation for patriotism, by the violence of their discourses, founding on their riotous declamations and the passions of the multitude, oblivion of the past and hope for the future, and redeeming themselves from disgrace by impudence. At the clubs are daily proclaimed, sentiments and even principles which threaten the fortunes and the property of all. Under the names of *forestalling* and *monopoly*, industry and commerce are represented as crimes. Every rich man passes for a public enemy. Neither honor nor reputation is spared; odious suspicions and unbridled slander are called *liberty of opinion*. He who demands proof of an accusation, is a suspected man, an enemy of the people. At the clubs, every absurdity is admired, if it be only murderous — every falsehood cherished, if it be only atrocious. \* \* \* \* \* Sometimes, indeed, guilty parties are assailed, but they are assailed with a violence, a ferocity, and an unfairness that make them appear innocent."

About the same time, (its exact date and the medium of its publication are uncertain,) Chénier wrote *The Altars of Fear*, a sort of last appeal to the lovers of good order. Its title alludes to the practice of the ancients, who made *fear* a divinity, and erected altars to him.

"To be sure, we have not yet imitated them to the letter, but, as in all ages profoundly religious men have observed that the heart is the true altar where the Deity chooses to be honored, and that internal adoration is a thousand times more valuable than all the pomp of a magnificent worship intrusted to a small number of persons, and confined to certain places by express consecration, we may say that fear had never more truly altars erected to it, than now in Paris; that this whole city is its temple; that all respectable people have become its pontiffs, offering to it the daily sacrifice of their opinions and their conscience."

The mob commit excesses; personal privacy and personal liberty are invaded; the respectable people say nothing against it or about it, „*for fear of being called aristocrats.*”

"The simple sound of this word *aristocrat* stupefies the public man, and attacks the very principle of motion in him. He wishes the success of the good, with all his heart; he is making zealous



exertions that way, and would sacrifice all his fortune to it: in the midst of his action, let him hear those four fatal syllables pronounced against him, and he trembles, he grows pale, the sword of the law falls from his grasp. Now it is clear enough, that Cicero will never be anything better than an *aristocrat*, to take Clodius or Catiline's word for it: if, then Cicero is afraid, what will become of us?"

It must be pleaded, however, in excuse for these respectable people who said nothing *for fear being called aristocrats*, that they had pretty urgent motives for silence. To be unpopular at that day, was to have your head cut off: the terms were convertible. There are many among us, to whom such reproaches are infinitely more applicable, men who will not lift up their voices against some popular abuse or injustice or prejudice, for fear of being called federalist or aristocrat; although, thank God! to call a man federalist or aristocrat neither knocks him on the head nor even takes a cent out of his pocket. And when we hear a man complaining of the *tyranny of the majority* and *popular intimidation* because his independent conduct has caused his fellow-townsmen to refuse him their voices at an election, or made some honest editor afraid to publish his communications, we would just refer him to Chenier, who was putting his neck under the axe every time he took pen in hand.

The momentous tenth of August came, and that notorious popular potentate whom our saucy friends over the water have facetiously denominated "the Yankee Justinian," had the supreme jurisdiction in Paris. The *Journal de Paris* was put down *vi et armis*, and its conductors and contributors precipitately scattered. Chénier was in imminent danger; many thought that he must have fallen a victim to the popular fury, and Wieland, the German poet, wrote to inquire *if he were yet alive*. But he was not dead yet, nor even silent; only his writings were now anonymous or pseudonymous. Owing to this fact, nearly all that he published in the autumn and winter of 1792—3 has been lost. It is certain, however, that he was the author of the letter in which Louis after his condemnation vainly appealed to the French people. After the king's death his friends persuaded him to quit Paris for Versailles, where he remained a whole year. By that time most of his personal enemies had disappeared, some torn to pieces by wolves, and some by



their fellow Jacobins. But Collot d'Herbois still lived, and his power nearly equalled Robespierre's.

On the 6th of January, 1794, Chénier was arrested. The immediate and ostensible cause of his arrest was a visit to a suspected lady at Passy. The proceeding was utterly illegal, even according to such scanty remains of law as the Terrorists had preserved for themselves, for Chénier was not under the local jurisdiction of the man who seized him, and had a safe conduct and certificate of good citizenship from the authorities of his *quartier*. Indeed the gaoler of the Luxemburg prison refused to receive him, but the functionary at St. Lazare was less scrupulous.

As Joseph Chénier had been an influential Jacobin and a member of the Convention, there were not wanting persons afterwards to assert that he had neglected to save his brother's life when it was in his power to do so; nay, some even charged him with having contributed to his condemnation. This imputation his friends have indignantly repelled. They maintain that, on the contrary, it was chiefly through his influence that André had remained unmolested for the sixteen months preceding. They affirm, moreover, that Joseph had been for some time virtually disconnected with the Jacobins, having grown wiser as they grew more frantic; that he was then a suspected if not a denounced man, and would himself have shared the fate of André, had the rule of Robespierre lasted a fortnight longer. The two pleas are not perfectly consistent, and we think that generally the editors and biographers of the brothers have erred in trying to prove too much, and in giving to the accusation a greater importance than it deserved.\* For our own part, we do not believe one syllable of it. The Chéniers had that strong family attachment which all families ought to have, and it is absurd to suppose that if Joseph regarded the wishes of his relatives, when the question was only about breaking off a paper war with his brother, he would have disregarded them when that

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\* Especially do we think M. Arnault to blame, for seriously confuting, in a narration of two pages, a scandalous story of Madame de Genlis, about Mademoiselle Dumesnil's reception of Joseph Chénier; as if a French actress would trouble herself about *truth*, when there was a chance of saying a *mot*, or making a scene.



brother's life was at stake. The advice he gave his father, who wished him to agitate openly for his brothers, "Rather try to let them be forgotten," was the very best that could have been given, as the event too truly showed. Had nothing been said about André, he might have remained unnoticed for *two days longer*, which would have been enough to save his life, and actually did save the life of Sauveur; but the memorial which his father addressed to that body called with a mournful irony *the Committee of Public Safety*, was his death-warrant.\*

And now comes a characteristic specimen of radical inaccuracy. Another of the Cheniers, Sauveur, formerly an officer in the army of the north, had been arrested and imprisoned at Beauvais. In such haste was the indictment against Andre drawn up, that it confounded him with Sauveur; attributed to one brother the acts and writings of both, and designated the poet-editor as ex-adjuvant-general and chief of brigade, under Dumouriez! One of Andre's eulogists suggests that he made no allusion to this palpable flaw, in hopes that this confusion of personal identity might be the means of saying his brother. If so, his silence was successful.

There were, indeed, many reasons why Andre Chenier should have made no further opposition to the proceedings against him, than was necessary to expose their injustice and illegality in the eyes of future generations. To one whose patriotic hopes had been so cruelly disappointed, life was of little value. When a man of refined education, liberal principles, hopes of liberal institutions, and freedom from party fanaticism, sees all constitutional landmarks swept away, and the ochlocracy triumphant, his despondency is utter and hopeless. He has "lost the dream of doing and the other dream of done," and knows not how to help himself or others. In one case only

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\* And yet, after all, must we not say that, in a higher sense, Joseph Chenier was morally guilty of his brother's death? He had encouraged the Jacobins in their earlier attempts; he had defended or apologized for their excesses; he had given them his pen, his voice, and his influence. In so far, then, as he had contributed to their triumph must he be deemed answerable for the consequences of that triumph. Alas! it is not too well remembered even at the present day, that *they who help to open the flood-gates, are responsible for the inundation.*



can be sustained. If his mind has been deeply imbued with the true philosophy — the philosophy of Christianity — he may remember that “God fulfils himself in many ways,” and faith will illumine for him what, to the eye of reason alone, is thick darkness.

θάρασει μοι θάρασει τέχνον,  
μέγας ἔτι ἐν οὐρανῳ Ζεὺς  
ὃ τάδ' ἐφορᾷ καὶ κρατύνει.

But we very much fear Chenier had not this consolation. His views, lofty and noble as they were, were still bounded by this world and the limits of human ability. And at that time it seemed as if no human ability could do anything for the French. The people from whom the gallows was a more acceptable gift than the right hand of friendship,\* had triumphed, and he had long before made up his mind which alternative to choose.

Chenier was guillotined July 25th, 1794. His works were not collected till 1819, and complete editions of them did not appear till 1840.

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## RECENT ENGLISH HISTORIANS OF ANCIENT GREECE.\*\*

American Review, Feb. 1848.

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THE study of Greek History is a very different affair now from what it was when Plutarch was accepted for a standard authority, and “Cecrops, who invented marriage,”† was deemed as historical a personage as Alexander of Macedon. Our readers may be presumed

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\* “S'ils triomphent, ce sont gens par qui il vaut mieux être pendu que regarder comme ami.” — *Avis aux Français sur leurs véritables Ennemis*.

\*\* *A History of Greece*, by the Right Rev. CONNOP THIRLWALL. London: Longman & Co. 1835, 1844. *A History of Greece*, by GEO. GROTE, Esq. London: John Murray. 1846-7.

† Athenæus XIII, 555.



to be familiar with, or at least to have some general idea of the way in which Niebuhr and Arnold (not to mention the more fanciful speculations of Michelet) have taken to pieces and reconstructed the early Roman narrative; and the Greek legends are now subjected to a somewhat similar process by both English and Germans. It certainly does seem strange at first, that an Englishman or German in this nineteenth century should pretend to know more about those remote ages, than the people who lived so much nearer to them — the Roman who flourished at the beginning of our era, and the Greek who wrote hundreds of years before it: but the apparent paradox vanishes when we consider the *historical sense* and habits of philosophical criticism acquired by the moderns. Etymological and philological studies alone have done much. When it has been clearly shown that Livy mistranslated Greek words, and confused old and new meanings of Latin words, and that Apollonius Rhodius misunderstood and misapplied Homeric expressions, we have less hesitation in questioning the accuracy of avowedly poetical narrative of the one and the more specious history of the other; and the detection of such illusory etymologies as those which gave rise to the traditions connected with the Apaturian festival at Athens, and the street Argiletum in Rome, encourages us to apply the same rule of interpretation to other etymologically founded stories.

It is not our intention to take any notice of Goldsmith and Gillies, and others of whom we have a dim recollection from our boyhood. But as Mitford, although pretty well laid on the shelf in his own country, still enjoys on this side the Atlantic the reputation and position of a standard historian it would hardly be proper in an article on this subject to omit all mention of him. That his qualifications for the task he undertook surpassed those of his predecessors, and that his work was a great improvement on theirs, is freely admitted. But, to waive the consideration of other faults, there is one inherent defect in the book. It is the history of a people generally republican and partly democratic, written expressly to "show up" democracy. Nay, more, it was written with the evident purpose of drawing a modern conservative British moral from the history of ancient



Greek republics. Now a man who sets out with a strong political bias in favor of the institutions of any country, is not likely to make a faithful historian; but much more unlikely is he who starts with a predetermination to see everything in the worst possible light, the facts of history being unfortunately for the most part bad enough in themselves, without any gratuitous blackening. Such a course is sufficiently delusive when only contemporaries are under investigation: it is still worse when we undertake to judge of the customs and actions of the men of one age by the standards of another; such inferences, however encouraged by the necessary licenses of the poet and the dramatist, make sad work with ethical and political speculations. We all see the absurdity of the thing when a young lady in a Magazine story, makes a modern lover of Pericles, or some other Greek worthy, and provides him with a heroine of the modern pattern. We are less quick to perceive the fallacy when a modern Platonist turns the Athenian philosopher into a High-Church divine. Still less prompt are we to disentangle ourselves when the political theorist argues from Rome to England, or from Athens to America, either with or without some such intermediate step as Venice, since so many of the important fundamental terms, Aristocracy, Democracy, &c., remain the same. But the error is none the less, because it is the less transparent. Whately has said that "wisdom consists in the ready and accurate perception of analogies;"\* but surely a *ready and accurate discrimination of differences* deserves some place in the definition. "Human nature is the same in all ages," we are told; and this text suggests appropriate comments against *unnatural* schemes, as when it is proposed to construct the bricks of the political edifice without straw, or to compose perfection by an aggregate of imperfections. But we must always make allowance, and great allowance, for the effect of habit and experience. If the republican Greeks had no idea of a king, but as a man who "subverts the customs of the country, violates women, and puts men to death without trial,"† their idea was in precise conformity with their experience of

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\* Rhetoric, pp. 104, 105.

† Herodotus, iii. 80, quoted by Mr. Grote.



the *ῥήγαντοι*; nor can we blame them for not having admitted that conception of constitutional government which it took centuries of subsequent experiment to realize.

Flattering to English ideas of government and conformable to old tory dogmas, possessing, too, the positive merits it did, Mitford's Greece might well occupy the position it so long enjoyed. But it does great credit to the good sense and judgment of the British public, that when a more liberal as well as more learned successor appeared — indeed, before he fairly had appeared — they were ready to receive and adopt him. It is curious to remark how in this respect monarchical England has taken the start of republican America. With us Mitford still speaks as one having authority, while over the water he is utterly dethroned by Thirlwall, and only to be found in the libraries of secluded parsons and antique country gentlemen.

We should, however, be doing great injustice to the Bishop of St. David's were we to represent the vindication of the Greek democracies from Mitford's assault either as the sole object of the work or the main ground of its success, though it is incidentally connected with both. Since Mitford's time the study of Greek history had made rapid advances. The labors of C. O. Müller and other eminent Germans had thrown new light upon it. A Greek history was required which should at least embody the results of their researches, even if it added nothing to them. The spirit of the times demanded not merely a more genial political thinker, but a deeper and more finished scholar, than Mr. Mitford.

Thirlwall's history, then, is conceived in a liberal spirit, and displays an erudition which renders it a most valuable book for students. Still it is not in all respects satisfactory, nor is it exactly the kind of book to become universally popular. The author speaks in his preface of two classes of readers,\* for the former of whom, undoubtedly by far the larger, the work is principally designed; but the execution of the work is such as to

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\* "One consisting of persons who wish to acquire something more than a superficial acquaintance with Greek history, but who have neither leisure nor means to study it for themselves in its original sources; the other of such as have access to the ancient authors, but often feel the need of a guide and an interpreter."



render it far more acceptable to the smaller class. As a book of reference, and what is technically called *cram*, it is unsurpassed. But the style, though clear and argumentative, is the very reverse of brilliant or graphic; and the general tone of the book is to a mere *reader*, what we cannot give a better idea of than by calling it *Hallam's Middle-Ages-ish*. Moreover, the reverend historian has, with an amiable but sometimes embarrassing modesty, been more solicitous to collate and condense the opinions of others than to arrive at decisions of his own, so that in many places the book is chiefly valuable as a synopsis of different views, and in some its very copiousness of information is bewildering. While, therefore, Thirlwall's *Greece* found an immediate place in the library of every student, it was felt that there was still room for another *History of Greece*, which should be attractive as well as critical, and give results as well as materials; and the announcement that Mr. George Grote was about to endeavor to supply this want excited a lively interest.

Mr. Grote is well known to the commercial world as a partner in one of the great London banking houses, and not unknown in the political. His principles are what is generally called *philosophical radical*, that is to say, encouraging the freest range of speculation and discussion, but not countenancing haste or violence in action.\* When in Parliament, where he twice represented the city of London, he was chiefly distinguished for proposing and advocating Vote by Ballot. But this method of exercising the franchise, natural and proper as it appears to us, is highly repugnant to English usages and prejudices, Mr. Grote found little support from his own party, and the great clerical wit, usually foremost in the ranks of the reformers, signally contributed to laugh down the proposed reform. More recently Mr. Grote has studied and personally inspected the affairs of Switzerland, and has very lately published in the *Spectator* a series of letters containing a triumphant vindication of President Ochsenbein and the Diet. Amid all his

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\* And it may be added, much more practical and common sense than one would be led to infer from Sidney Smith's somewhat supercilious remark, that "if the world were a chess-board, he would be an important politician."



various pursuits he never lost sight of his great literary work, projected at a very early period of his life (some say before he left the university). With every allowance for frequent interruptions,\* it is probably rather an understatement of the case to say, that the eight intended volumes (we have a suspicion that they will run over by one or two) will represent twenty years' hard work. And should any one be disposed to think this an overestimate, we would request him, before pronouncing a positive opinion, to make himself master of *one book* of Herodotus or Thucydides, first making sure that he understands the author's meaning, and then collating and digesting the authorities on all historical and archæological points involved or alluded to. The time thus occupied will give him some measure of that which must have been expended on Mr. Grote's History, into which (supposing the remaining volumes to equal the promise of the four already published) it is not too much to say that the reading of a life will have been worked, so various are the sources from which Mr. Grote draws his authorities and illustrations. And all this learning is introduced most naturally and appropriately; for the author is one of those rare specimens, a scholar without any of the disagreeable peculiarities of scholars, without pedantry or dogmatism or "shop" of any kind.† Unconnected with academical honors or any sort of academical business as his name was, his appearance as a classical historian subjected him to a most rigorous scrutiny from all those firstclass men and medallists who thought they had taken out a patent for all classical learning in the "Schools" and the "Tripos;" and the paucity and trivia-

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\* The preface states indeed that the author has only been able to devote "continuous and exclusive labor" to his work for the last three or four years; but farther on in the preface there is an implied admission that the book had made considerable progress before Thirlwall's began to appear.

† There is but one thing in the book which savors in the least of pedantry — an affectation of purism in spelling the Greek names with Greek instead of Roman letters. This is very harsh in some cases to the ear as well as the eye, the change of spelling involving a change of pronunciation in such names as Alkæus and Phokylides. Nor is Mr. Grote always consistent with himself: why should Perikles be spelt with *k* and Calypso not? Even the same word varies in different volumes! we have *Crete* in the first and *Krete* in the fourth.



lity of the inaccuracies they have been able to discover bear witness to the accuracy and depth of his work.

His opening is bold and novel. Instead of beginning with the geography of the country, and then passing to the early inhabitants, as Thirlwall and his predecessors generally have done, he commences with the stories about the gods — the Greek Mythology, in fact. With this he immediately connects the legends of the heroic age, all the personages of which he considers equally mythical and fabulous with the gods and goddesses. Hector and Agamemnon are put into the same category with Zeus and Apollo, and authentic history begins only with the first Olympiad. In anticipation of surprise and censure, he thus speaks in his preface: —

“The times which I thus set apart from the regions of history are discernible only through a different atmosphere — that of epic poetry and legend. To confound together these disparate matters is, in my judgment, entirely unphilosophical. I describe the earlier times by themselves, as conceived by the faith and feeling of the first Greeks, and known only through their legends — without presuming to measure how much or how little of historical matter these legends may contain. If the reader blame me for not assisting him to determine this — if he ask me why I do not undraw the curtain and disclose the picture — I reply in the words of the painter Zeuxis, when the same question was addressed to him, on exhibiting his masterpiece of imitative art: ‘The curtain is the picture’ What we now read as poetry and legend, was once accredited history, and the only genuine history which the first Greeks could conceive or relish of the past time: the curtain conceals nothing behind, and cannot by any possibility be withdrawn. I undertake only to show it as it stands — not to efface, still less to repaint it.” — Preface, pp. xii., xiii.

These legends occupy about 450 pages, or two-thirds of the first volume. Mr. Grote’s narrative style in relating them, seems to us remarkably happy — simple without being prosaic, and carrying the reader straight forward through very involved and contradictory stories. The difficulty of telling these old tales in a form acceptable and suitable to modern readers, is confessedly very great, as the singular expedient to which Arnold had recourse testifies. To us, Mr. G. seems to have hit the very thing; but “doctors differ:” a writer in the *Classical Museum* thinks that “his style is too homely, and that he might



have risen more with his theme."\* We should like to extract a legend or two, that our readers might judge for themselves, but it is more important to examine our author's way of dealing with the nature and historical value of these mythes. We cannot take a better specimen than the "tale of Troy divine," contrasting Grote's broad conclusion upon it with Thirlwall's Euemerizing doubts. The latter, after sketching or rather *hinting at* the story of Troy, in just eleven lines, proceeds thus:—†

"Such is the brief outline [brief indeed!] of a story which the poems of Homer have made familiar to most readers, long before they are tempted to inquire into its historical basis; and it is consequently difficult to enter upon the inquiry without some prepossessions unfavorable to an impartial judgment. Here, however, we must not be deterred from stating our view of the subject, by the certainty that it will appear to some paradoxical, while others will think that it savors of excessive credulity. According to the rules of sound criticism, very cogent arguments ought to be required to induce us to reject as a mere fiction a tradition so ancient, so universally received, so definite and so interwoven with the whole mass of the national recollections, as that of the Trojan war. Even if unfounded, it must still have had some adequate occasion and motive, and it is difficult to imagine what this could have been, unless it arose out of the Greek colonies in Asia; and in this case its universal reception in Greece itself is not easily explained. The leaders of the earliest among these colonies which were planted in the neighborhood of Troy, claimed Agamemnon as their ancestor; but if this had suggested the story of his victories in Asia, this scene would probably have been fixed in the very region occupied by his descendants, not in an adjacent land. On the other hand, the course taken by this first (Æolian) migration falls in naturally with a previous tradition of a conquest achieved by Greeks in Asia. We therefore conceive it necessary to admit the reality of the Trojan war as a general fact; *but beyond this we scarcely venture to proceed a single step.* Its cause and its issue, the manner in which it was conducted and the parties engaged in it, are all involved in an obscurity which we cannot pretend to penetrate. We find it impossible to adopt the poetical story of Helen, partly on account of its inherent improbability, and partly because we are convinced that Helen is a merely mythological person. The common account of the origin of the war has indeed been defended on the ground that it is perfectly consistent with the manners of the

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\* W. M. Gunn, *Classical Museum*, vol. V., p. 132.

† In this and the following extracts we have occasionally taken the liberty of italicizing a passage.



age — as if a popular tale, whether true or false, could be at variance with them. The feature in the narrative which strikes us as in the highest degree improbable, setting the character of the parties out of the question, is the intercourse implied in it between Troy and Sparta. As to the heroine, it would be sufficient to raise a strong suspicion of her fabulous nature, to observe that she is classed by Herodotus with Io, and Europa, and Medea, all of them persons who on distinct grounds, must clearly be referred to the domain of mythology. This suspicion is confirmed by all the particulars of her legend, by her birth, by her relation to the divine twins, whose worship seems to have been one of the most ancient forms of religion in Peloponnesus, and especially in Laconia, and by the divine honors paid to her at Sparta and elsewhere. But a still stronger reason for doubting the reality of the motive assigned by Homer for the Trojan war is, that the same incident occurs in another circle of fictions, and that, in the abduction of Helen, Paris only repeats an exploit also attributed to Theseus. \* \* \* \* If however we reject the traditional occasion of the Trojan war, we are driven to conjecture in order to explain the real connection of the events; yet not so as to be wholly without traces to direct us. We have already observed that the Argonautic expedition was sometimes represented as connected with the first conflict between Greece and Troy. This was according to the legend which numbered Hercules among the Argonauts and supposed him, on the voyage, to have rendered a service to the Trojan king, Laomedon, who afterwards defrauded him of his recompense. The main fact, however, that Troy was taken and sacked by Hercules, is recognized by Homer; and thus we see it already provoking the enmity or tempting the cupidity of the Greeks, in the generation before the celebrated war, and it may easily be conceived that if its power and opulence revived after this blow, it might again excite the same feelings." — Thirlwall, vol. I., pp. 151-153.

Here Homer's statement is received as authoritative; yet only four pages after we find that,

"However near the poet, if he is to be considered a single one, lived to the times of which he sings, *it is clear that he did not suffer himself to be fettered by his knowledge of the facts.* For aught we know, he may have been a contemporary of those who had fought under Achilles, but it is not the less true, that he describes his principal hero as the son of a sea-goddess. He and his hearers most probably looked upon epic song as a vehicle of history, and therefore it required a popular tradition for its basis. \* \* \* But it is equally manifest that the kind of history for which he invoked the aid of the Muses to strengthen his memory, *was not chiefly valued as a recital of real events, that it was one in which the marvellous*



*appeared natural, and that form of the narrative most credible which tended most to exalt the glory of his heroes."* Vol. I. pp. 157-8.

Now let us hear Mr. Grote. After giving at length (say forty pages) as consistent a narrative of the Trojan siege as can be compiled out of the various poets, historians and logographers, he thus continues his speculations on it: —

"Thus endeth the Trojan war, together with its sequel, the dispersion of the heroes, victors as well as vanquished. The account here given of it has been unavoidably brief and imperfect; for in a work intended to follow consecutively the real history of the Greeks, no greater space can be allotted even to the most splendid gem of their legendary period. Indeed, it would be easy to fill a large volume with the separate incidents which have been introduced into the 'Trojan cycle;' the misfortune is, that they are for the most part so contradictory, as to exclude the possibility of weaving them into one connected narrative. We are compelled to select one out of the number generally, without any solid ground of preference, and then to note the variations of the rest. No one who has not studied the original documents, can imagine the extent to which this discrepancy proceeds: it covers almost every portion and fragment of the tale. But though much may have been thus omitted, of what the reader might expect to find in an account of the Trojan war, its genuine character has been studiously preserved without either exaggeration or abatement. The real Trojan war is that which was recounted by Homer and the old epic poets, and continued by all the lyric and tragical composers; for the latter, though they took great liberties with the particular incidents, yet worked more or less faithfully on the Homeric scale. \* \* \* \* And the incidents comprised in the Trojan cycle were familiarized, not only to the public mind, but also to the public eye, by innumerable representations both of the sculptor and the painter — those which were romantic and chivalrous, being better adapted for this purpose, and therefore more constantly employed, than any other. Of such events the genuine Trojan war of the old epic was for the most part composed. Though literally believed, reverentially cherished, and numbered among the gigantic phenomena of the past by the Grecian public, it is in the eyes of modern inquiry essentially a legend, and nothing more. *If we are asked whether it be not a legend embodying portions of historical matter, and raised upon a basis of truth — whether there may not really have occurred at the foot of the hill of Ilium a war purely human and political, without gods, without heroes, without Helen, without Amazons, without Ethiopians under the beautiful son of Eös, without the wooden horse, without the characteristic and expressive features of the old epical war — like the mutilated trunk of Deiphobus in the under-world — if*



*we are asked whether there was not really some such historical Trojan war as this, our answer must be, that as the possibility of it cannot be denied, so neither can the reality of it be affirmed.* We possess nothing but the ancient epic itself, without any independent evidence: had it been an age of records indeed, the Homeric epic, in its exquisite and unsuspecting simplicity, would probably never have come into existence. Whoever, therefore, ventures to dissect Homer, Arctinus and Leschæa, and to pick out certain portions as matters of fact, while he sets aside the rest as fiction, must do so in full reliance on his own powers of historical divination, without any means either of proving or verifying his conclusions." — Vol. I., pp. 432-6.

Is Mr. Grote then a mere destructive, who applies the besom of skepticism to the heroic age, and sweeps it remorselessly away? No; he restores the old legends in all their integrity to their proper place and function. They have no "objective reality either historical or philosophical;" but "their *subjective* value, looking at them purely as elements of Grecian thought and feeling," is very great. Tho the expansion of this principle, the remainder of the first volume is devoted.

To understand the true theory of these narratives, we must first consider the intellectual position of the people among whom they sprung up.

In those days imagination and sympathy supplied the place of geography and physical science. But many causes, and first of all, "the expansive force of Grecian intellect itself," caused different constructions to be put upon these products of early fancy. Mr. Grote goes through the treatment of the mythes by the earlier philosophers and the dramatic poets, and the *attempts* of the historians to make history of them; Herodotus' adoption of the more plausible Egyptian version of the story of Helen; Thucydides' exposition of the Trojan war as a great political enterprise, an exposition which "would, doubtless, have been historical truth *if* any independent evidence could have been found to sustain it," but which, in the absence of such evidence, must be viewed as "a mere extract and distillation from the incredibilities of the poets;" and so on down to Eumerus, that disenchanter of the ancient romance, whose name has passed into a familiar word with scholars; and Palæphatus, whose results "exhibit the maximum which the semi-historical theory can ever present: by aid of conjecture,



we get out of the impossible and arrive at matters intrinsically plausible but totally uncertified." He then sketches the allegorical theory, and decides on the respective merits of the two.

The discussion is summed up in four conclusions to this effect: —

1. The Greek legends are "a special product of the imagination and feelings, radically distinct from both history and philosophy," and not reducible to either. Some few of them are indeed allegorical, and some have doubtless a substratum or element of fact; but how much is fact and how much mere "mythe" we cannot, in the absence of collateral evidence, determine.

2. The personages of the mythical world are a series of gods and men mixed together, and no such series can serve as materials for chronological calculation.

3. The legends originated in an age which had no records, no science and no criticism, but great faith, great imagination, and great avidity for new narrative; "penetrable by poets and prophets in the same proportion that it was indifferent to positive evidence."

4. The Greek mind having become historical, critical and philosophical, detected the inconsistencies and incongruities of the mythes, but was restrained from discarding them entirely by the national reverence for antiquity. So, "whilst the literal mythe still continued to float among the poets and the people, critical men interpreted, altered, decomposed and added, until they found something which satisfied their minds as a supposed real basis. They manufactured some dogmas of supposed original philosophy, and a long series of fancied history and chronology, retaining the mythical names and generations even when they were obliged to discard or recast the mythical events. The interpreted mythe was thus promoted into a reality, while the literal mythe was degraded into a fiction." Pp. 598—601.

Our extracts have been carefully selected, with a view to give the reader a good idea of Mr. Grote's method of dealing with the heroic period of Greek history. And, we ask, is not his treatment of these mythical personages more conservative and respectful than Euemerizing or allegorizing them away? According to his view, Hector, and Andromache, and Œdipus and Antigone



exist, as Othello, and Desdemona, and Jeannie Deans, and Lucy Ashton exist. Is not such an existence good enough for them?

In the concluding chapter of this volume, Mr. Grote felicitously illustrates his positions by comparing the mythes of ancient Greece with those of modern Europe. In the former country the mythopœic vein continued in the same course, only with abated current and influence; in the latter "its ancient bed was blocked up, and it was turned into new and divided channels" by the introduction of Christianity. The old German and Scandinavian kings used to trace their pedigrees to Odin. "After the worship attached to Odin had been extinguished, the genealogical line was lengthened up to Japhet or Noah; and Odin, no longer accounted worthy to stand at the top, was degraded into one of the simple human members of it. \* \* \* \* This transposition of the genealogical root is the more worthy of notice, as it illustrates the general character of these genealogies, and shows that they sprung not from any erroneous historical data, but from the turn of the religious feeling; also that their true value is derived from their being taken entire, as connecting the existing race of men with a divine original."

We have ourselves seen the pedigree of an English country gentleman (one of the "protectionists" in parliament) which went, through a Saxon king, straight up to Thor and Odin. To be sure, the member of the family who showed it to us modestly admitted that the descent *previous to the Heptarchy* was not perfectly authenticated.

We pass on to the voluminous and puerile legends of the saints, and the more poetical romances of chivalry. "What the legends of Troy, of Thebes, of the Calydonian boar, of Œdipus, Theseus, &c., were to an early Greek, the tales of Arthur, of Charlemagne, of the Niebelungen, were to an Englishman, or Frenchman, or German of the twelfth or thirteenth century. They were neither recognized fiction nor authenticated history; they were history as it is felt and welcomed by minds unaccustomed to investigate evidence and unconscious of the necessity of doing so. That the Chronicle of Turpin, a mere compilation of poetical legends respecting Charlemagne, was accepted as genuine history, and even pronounced to be such by papal authority, is well known;



and the authors of the romances announce themselves, not less than those of the old Grecian epic, as being about to recount real matter of fact. It is certain that Charlemagne is a great historical name, and it is possible, though not certain, that the name of Arthur may be historical also; but the Charlemagne of history and the Charlemagne of romance have little except the name in common; nor could we ever determine, except by independent evidence, (which in this case we happen to possess,) whether Charlemagne was a real or fictitious person."

Thus in the famous story of Roland and Roncesvalles, which Mr. Grote might have specified particularly, (and we are some what surprised he did not,) suppose we had nothing but the Turpin Chronicle to guide us, how likely should we be, by "making shots" at the probabilities of the case, to eliminate the real facts of Charlemagne's invasion of Spain, and the surprise of his rear-guard by the Pyrenean mountaineers? But we may bring down these quasi-historical tales to a period much later than even Mr. Grote has attempted. The story of the French frigate *Le Vengeur*, which went down with her colors flying and her men shouting *Vive la Republique!* is well known; and it has also been proved in black and white that the story is a sheer fabrication — that the ship did go down indeed, but not before she had surrendered, and that her captain and many of her crew were saved by the victorious adversary. Now, had only the French-republican version of this affair remained, it might well have imposed on posterity. Here then are two popular stories, *in which the main issue of the narrative is directly contrary to the known fact* — bearing the strongest testimony to the correctness of Mr. Grote's principle. For it must be remembered that he denies, not the existence of a basis of fact to some of the Greek legends, but the possibility of our determining what that fact is. For all that we know to the contrary, Dio Chrysostom's version of the Trojan war may be the true one, and the Greeks may have been the beaten party. For all we know to the contrary, the real Thersites may have had as much resemblance to the Thersites of Homer, as the Falstolfe of history has to the Falstaff of Shakspeare.

All our readers may not be aware that the English



historians so late as the seventeenth century began the annals of their country with a mythical personage, *Brute the Trojan*, and carried it down to the Roman invasion through a long line of kings.

"In a dispute which took place during the reign of Edward I, (A. D. 1301,) between England and Scotland, the descent of the kings of England from Brute the Trojan was solemnly embodied in a document put forth to sustain the crown of England, as an argument bearing on the case then in discussion; and it passed without attack from the opposing party."

Milton's opinion, cited by Mr. Grote, is curious and apposite: — \*

"But now of Brutus and his line, with the whole progeny of kings to the entrance of Julius Cæsar, we cannot be so easily discharged; descents of ancestry long continued, laws and exploits not plainly seeming to be borrowed or devised, which on the common belief have wrought no small impression; *defended by many, utterly denied by few*. For what, though Brutus and the whole Trojan pretence were yielded up, seeing they who first devised to bring us some noble ancestor, were content with Brutus the Consul, the better invention, though not willing to forego the name, taught them to remove it higher into a more fabulous age, and by the same remove lighting on the Trojan tales, in affectation to make the Briton of one original with the Roman, pitched there: *Yet those old and inborn kings, never any to have been real persons, or done in their lives, at least, some part of what so long hath been remembered, cannot be thought without too strict incredulity*. For these, and those causes above mentioned, that which hath received approbation from so many, I have chosen not to omit. Certain or uncertain, be that upon the credit of those whom I must follow; *so far as keeps aloof from impossible and absurd*, attested by ancient writers from books more ancient, I refuse not, as the due and proper subject of story." History of England, apud Grote, pp. 641, 642.

Yet the historians of this day begin the history of England with Julius Cæsar, and on strictly analogous principles our Greek historian has concluded that

"Two courses, and two only, are open; either to pass over the mythes altogether, which is the way in which modern historians treat the old British fables, or else to give an account of them as mythes; to recognize and respect their specific nature, and to abstain from confounding them with ordinary and certifiable history. There are good reasons for pursuing this second method, in reference to the

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\* The italics here are Mr. Grote's.



Grecian mythes; and when so considered, they constitute an important chapter in the history of the Grecian mind, and, indeed, in that of the human race generally."

We have now done with the first volume, but Mr. Grote has not yet finished clearing his ground. In the beginning of his second he attacks the heroic chronology of Fynes Clinton's *Fasti Hellenici*, which he rejects *in toto*, on various accounts, but chiefly for a reason already alluded to, that the introduction of confessedly fabulous personages in a series utterly destroys its value as a basis for chronological computations.

"In the estimate of the ancient chronologers, three succeeding persons of the same lineage — grandfather, father and son — counted for a century; and this may pass in a rough way, so long as you are thoroughly satisfied that they are all real persons; but if in the succession of persons A, B, C, you strike out B as a fiction, the necessary continuity of data disappears." \*

He then proceeds to treat of the state of society and manners exhibited in Grecian legend, by poets who, "while professedly describing an uncertified past, involuntarily borrow their combinations from the surrounding present." Here, too, we observe in him a marked difference from his predecessors. The monarchist historians Gillies and Mitford, were sedulous to eulogize the heroic age, at the expense of those succeeding, because it was the age of kingly government. It is hardly necessary to say that Thirlwall has not fallen into this error; but Grote has gone further, and prominently brought out various points of moral improvement in the historical age, as compared with the heroic. He particularly specifies three, the providence of the law with respect to the person and property of orphans, the treatment of fallen enemies, and the legal punishment of homicide. In alluding to the fortification of towns, he observes: —

"This decided superiority of the means of defence over those of attack in rude ages, has been one of the grand promotive causes, both of the growth of civic life and of the general march of human improvement. It has enabled the progressive portions of mankind first to maintain their acquisitions against the predatory instinct of the ruder and poorer, and to surmount the difficulties of incipient organization; and ultimately, when their organization has been matured, both to acquire predominance, and to uphold it until their own disci-

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\* Grote, vol. II. p. 64.



plined habits have in part passed to their enemies. This important truth is illustrated not less by the history of ancient Greece, than by that of modern Europe during the middle ages." \*

In regard to the state of the arts, Grote and Thirlwall are at variance on an important question. The latter says, "That the art of writing already existed, though probably in a very rude state, before his [Homer's] age, it is scarcely possible to doubt." \*\* The former positively asserts that "neither coined money, *nor the art of writing*, nor painting, nor sculpture, nor imaginative architecture, belong to the Homeric and Hesiodic times." And then in a note, "The *σήματα λυγρὰ* mentioned in Iliad vi. 168, if they prove anything, are rather an evidence against than for the existence of alphabetical writing at the time when the Iliad was composed." † On this famous and much disputed passage, Thirlwall acutely observes, that it "has been the subject of controversy, perhaps, more earnest than the case deserved. It has been disputed whether the tablet contained alphabetical characters or mere pictures. The former seems to be the simplest and easiest interpretation of the poet's words: but if admitted, it only proves, what could hardly be questioned even without this evidence, [?] that the poet was not so ignorant of the art as never to have heard of its existence. \* \* \* And on the other hand, if the tablet contained only a picture or a series of imitative pictures, it would be evident that where the want of alphabetical writing was so felt, and had begun to be so supplied by drawing, the step by which the Greeks adopted the Phœnician characters must have been very soon taken, and it might be imagined that the poet was only describing a ruder state of the art which had acquired a new form in his time." †† And his last suggestion on this point is certainly ingenious and plausible: —

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\* Vol. II. p. 149.

\*\* Thirlwall, p. 247.

† Grote, Vol. II., p. 156. Mitford *accurately* quotes Homer's words *γράμματα λυγρὰ*, and then goes into a long discussion about *γράμμα* meaning a picture which he might have been spared the trouble of by merely looking into his Iliad.

†† Thirlwall, p. 242.



"According to every hypothesis the origin of the Homeric poetry is wrapt in mystery; as must be the case with the beginning of a new period when that which precedes it is very obscure. *And it would certainly be no unparalleled or surprising coincidence if the production of a great work, which formed the most momentous epoch in the history of Greek literature, should have concurred with either the first introduction, or a new application of the most important of all inventions.*" \*

This question of writing brings us at once to the Homeric controversy. On this Thirlwall says but little: what he does say, strongly favors the personality of Homer and the unity of the Homeric poems. At one thing we are much surprised: he rejects the existence of the *rhapsodists* as a gratuitous and improbable supposition. In support of the customary hypothesis, Mr. Grote adduces some conclusive instances, particularly the assertion of Xenophon, (Sympos. iii. 5,) that there were educated gentlemen in his time, at Athens, who could repeat both poems by heart; for Xenophon, we know, was a very straightforward and matter-of-fact man, not lightly to be suspected of inaccuracy or exaggeration. Throughout the whole investigation, Mr. G. has shown great discrimination in keeping distinct various questions which have been mixed up with and run into each other — the personality of the poet, the manner in which his poems were preserved, their separate or identical authorship, the time when they assumed their present form, &c. After alluding to the numerous discrepancies of statement respecting the epoch and birth-place of Homer, he is inclined to adopt as the most plausible theory, that he was the *eponymous hero* of the poetical fraternity of Homerids in the Ionic Island of Chios. The date of the Iliad and Odyssey, he places in the century before the first Olympiad. That the poems were preserved by the professional bards without any assistance from manuscripts, he considers proved, by the fact that blindness was not a disqualification for the profession. (Hymn. ad Apoll. 172.) The Wolfian theory that Pisistratus first made two complete poems out of what were before fragmentary ballads, he rejects as "not only unsupported by sufficient testimony, but also opposed to other testi-

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\* Thirlwall, p. 247.



mony, as well as to a strong force of internal probability." It "ascribes to Peisistratus a character not only materially different from what is indicated by Cicero and Pausanias, [Wolf's chief authorities,] who represented him not as having put together atoms originally distinct, but as the renovator of an ancient order subsequently lost — but also in itself unintelligible and inconsistent with Grecian habit and feeling."

"To sustain the inference that Peisistratus was the first architect of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, it ought at least to be shown that no other long and continuous poems existed during the earlier centuries. But the contrary of this is known to be the fact. The *Æthiopis* of Arktinus, which contained 9100 verses, dates from a period more than two centuries earlier than Peisistratus; several others of the lost cyclic epics, some among them of considerable length, appear during the century succeeding Arktinus; and it is important to notice that three or four at least of these poems passed under the name of Homer. There is no greater intrinsic difficulty in supposing long epics to have begun with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* than with the *Æthiopis*; the ascendancy of Homer and the subordinate position of Arktinus in the history of early Grecian poetry, tend to prove the former in preference to the latter." Vol. II., pp. 208-9.

But the chief argument is derived from the whole tenor of the poems themselves.

"There is nothing either in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* which savors of *modernism*, applying that term to the age of Peisistratus; nothing which brings to our view the alterations brought about by two centuries in the Greek language, the coined money, the habits of writing and reading, the despotisms and republican governments, the close military array, the improved construction of ships, the Amphictyonic convocations, \* \* \* &c., familiar to the latter epoch, which Onomacritus and the other literary friends of Peisistratus could hardly have failed to introduce, had they then for the first time undertaken the task of piecing together many self-existent epics into one large aggregate. Everything in the two great Homeric poems, both in substance and in language, belongs to an age two or three centuries earlier than Peisistratus." Vol. II., pp. 213-14.

At length we arrive at the great question — the unity of authorship. Mr. Grote, after lamenting the ferocious dogmatism which has too generally characterized this controversy, and confessed the difficulty, with our present limited means of knowledge, of forming a satisfactory conclusion one's self, much more of convincing others, thus continues: —



"Nevertheless no classical scholar can be easy without *some* opinion respecting the authorship of these immortal poems; and the more defective the evidence we possess, the more essential is it that all that evidence should be marshalled in the clearest order, and its bearing upon the points in controversy distinctly understood beforehand. Both these conditions seem to have been often neglected throughout the long-continued Homeric discussion. To illustrate the first point: Since two poems are comprehended in the problem to be solved, the natural process would be, first to study the easier of the two, and then to apply the conclusions hence deduced as a means of explaining the other. Now the *Odyssey*, looking at its aggregate character, is incomparably more easy to explain than the *Iliad*. Yet most Homeric critics apply the microscope at once, and in the first instance, to the *Iliad*. To illustrate the second point: What evidence is sufficient to negative the supposition that the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* is a poem — originally and intentionally one? Not simply particular gaps and contradictions, though they be even gross and numerous; but the preponderance of these proofs of mere unprepared coalescence over the other proofs of designed adaptation scattered throughout the whole poem. For the poet (or the co-operating poets, if more than one) may have intended to compose a harmonious whole, but may have realized their intention incompletely and left partial faults; or perhaps the contradictory lines may have crept in through a corrupt text. A survey of the whole poem is necessary to determine the question, and this necessity, too, has not always been attended to." Vol. II, pp. 219, 220.

The *Odyssey* (to which Mr. Grote, contrary to the usual opinion, but we think on good grounds, does *not* assign a later date than that of the *Iliad*) he views as bearing throughout unequivocal proofs of unity of design. With respect to the *Iliad* his opinion is different, and the theory which he propounds is certainly original and ingenious. That poem presents to him the appearance of "a house built upon a plan comparatively narrow, and subsequently enlarged by successive additions." *It was originally an Achilles*, comprising the first and eighth books with the books from the eleventh to the twenty-second inclusive. The last two books are a sort of appendix merely, but those from the second to the seventh, together with the tenth, "are of a wider and more comprehensive character, and convert the poem into an *Iliad*." The ninth book is a later interpolation, there being many passages in the eleventh and following books, which show that apology and atonement had *not* been offered to Achilles by



Agamemnon. This is explained at length, and also the continuity of structure observable in the books marked off as the original Achilleis, and the discrepancies introduced by the remaining books. Having characterized this theory as original and ingenious, we must be excused from expressing any further opinion upon it. Our own opinions about Homer have been always matter of faith rather than reason; we are too much interested in his romance ever to read him very critically; and as to the Teutonic Homeroclasts, we never could force ourselves to go continuously through one of them. On our slight acquaintance with them (and we refer more particularly to Wolf and Lachmann) they appear to us so prosaic and un-ideal and Poco Curanteish, that, however great their erudition, we do not admit their vocation to criticise poetry at all. With a man who puts the Iliad on the same footing with the Spanish ballads, we can find no common ground.

This brings us to the close of the first part of Mr. Grote's work; about half way through his second volume, and rather more than half way through Thirlwall's first.

After the return of the Heraclidæ — which Thirlwall Euemerizes into a Doric invasion and conquest, requiring "many years, probably many generations," for its consummation, and Grote disposes of among the mythes of the legendary age — we pass at once to the definite region of Historical Greece. Not that even here we are entirely freed from uncertainty, but the races and institutions at which we arrive are real and tangible, though in some cases — that of Lycurgus is a well-known instance — a cloud may still hang about their founders. We can always be pretty sure what laws, customs, and form of government existed in each place at a particular time, though something fabulous may still cling to the individual personages of the period. It is here, accordingly, that Mr. Grote takes occasion to bring in his sketch of Grecian geography. Something of the kind is generally considered a necessary introduction to a history: we confess to having some doubts of its indispensability. Arnold's most valuable and interesting work on Rome contains no geographical account of Italy; and yet singularly enough, Arnold himself has elsewhere insisted on the importance and necessity of the ordinary



course;\* nay, more, he illustrates its value by immediate reference to Italy, the natural features of which he proceeds to describe in his most felicitous manner. A good map is certainly always a requisite, and with this probably most readers would be satisfied. We half suspect that few persons, except conscientious reviewers like ourselves, peruse these geographical introductions. Both our authors are full and accurate in this part of their work; Grote, the more spirited and interesting of the two, as he has the greater dexterity in rendering a dry subject attractive, and illustrates his details by noting the differences as well as the resemblances of climate, natural productions, cultivation &c., in Ancient and Modern Greece.

And now before treating of the Peloponnesian Dorians, we have one more troublesome subject to adjust or get over in some way. Every student of Greek and Roman history has been more than once brought to a stand by the *Pelasgi*, an extinct people who seem to have been used as a convenient solution for all the problems in the archæology of the nations around the Mediterranean, much as electricity was once employed in physical philosophy to account for all unknown phenomena. The anxious inquirer, after laboring to shape some definite and consistent conclusion out of the various conflicting statements of ancient writers, and the still more conflicting inferences drawn from every one of these statements by modern scholars, generally has to end by confessing himself hopelessly puzzled. Whoever has worked through Niebuhr, and Thirlwall, and Malden,\*\* and Michelet — whoever has tried to form a coherent opinion of his own on the principal questions in dispute: whether the Pelasgians spoke Greek, or something very different from Greek; whether Herodotus ought to have written *Croton* where he wrote *Creston*, or Dionysius ought to have quoted *Creston* where he quoted *Croton*; whether the Tyrsenian Pelasgians came from Greece to Italy or *vice versa*, or whether they ever were in Italy at all; whether the real name of

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\* Lectures on Modern History, pp. 123, 124, 125, 128, 129.

\*\* Prof. Malden, of the London University, who began a History of Rome for the "Library of Useful knowledge" in 1880. The early numbers were remarkably promising, but under the fatality which seems to attend histories of Rome, it stopped short after the fifth.



the people whom we know through the Romans as *Etruscans* was *Rasena*, or whether these *Rasena* only exist in a wrong reading\* — whoever has blundered through all this, is struck with agreeable surprise, not unmingled with something like triumphant satisfaction, to find that Mr. Grote “shoots” these troublesome Pelasgi as unceremoniously as if they were so much rubbish. This is his summary method of dispatching them: —

“If any man is inclined to call the unknown ante-Hellenic period of Greece by the name of Pelasgic, it is open for him to do so; but this is a name carrying with it no assured predicates, no way enlarging our insight into real history, nor enabling us to explain — what would be the real historical problem — how or from whom the Hellenes acquired that stock of dispositions, aptitudes, arts, &c., with which they began their career. Whoever has examined the many conflicting systems respecting the Pelasgi — from the literal belief of Clavier, Larcher and Raoul Rochette, (which appears to me at least the most consistent way of proceeding,) to the interpretative and half incredulous processes applied by abler men, such as Niebuhr, or O. Müller, or Dr. Thirlwall, will not be displeased with my resolution to decline so insoluble a problem. No attested facts are now present to us — none were present to Herodotus and Thucydides even in their age — on which to build trustworthy affirmations respecting the ante-Hellenic Pelasgians; and where such is the case, we may without impropriety apply the remark of Herodotus respecting one of the theories which he had heard for explaining the inundation of the Nile by a supposed connection with the ocean — that ‘the man who carries up his story into the invisible world, passes out of the range of criticism.’” Vol. II., pp. 846, 7.

Certainly this is the pleasantest and most convenient way of getting rid of these Pelasgi; but after all, is it doing full justice to them and to ourselves? It strikes us that a student who began with and depended upon Mr. Grote, would be likely to underrate the importance of the question, at least as much as some enthusiastic speculators have overrated it, and to form a most inadequate idea of its bearings. He would find nothing about the extent of ground covered by Pelasgic traces and traditions — in Greece Proper, in Macedonia, around

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\* Mr. Grote is unusually liberal to the *Rasena*. He alludes to their existence without the least doubt or suspicion, at the close of the very chapter in which he has been making a clear sweep of the Pelasgi, the Græci, and the ante-Hellenic people generally.



the Hellespont, in the islands of the Archipelago, in Asia Minor, in Italy — nothing about the Pelasgic names, such as *Larissa*,\* that occur in various parts of Greece — nothing about the *Tyrseni*, and their connection with Greece on the one hand and Etruria on the other — nothing about those imperishable and extraordinary relics, the Cyclopean structures, except indeed Mr. Grote's off-hand disposal of them by adopting the conjecture of a German Professor, that "the character of the Greek limestone determined the polygonal style of architecture."\*\* Now we have always considered the whole Pelasgic question more valuable in reference to Latin, than in reference to Greek history, (though the general opinion, we are aware, tends the other way;) and we are well disposed to adopt Mr. Grote's two main propositions — that the Pelasgic language was not by any means Greek, and that it is impossible to predict with anything like accuracy what element, if any, of the Hellenic civilization and character was due to the Pelasgi; and it is for these very reasons — because we agree with him so far — that we regret his having handled the subject with such brevity, and not given us some of the prevalent views upon it, even though he ended by rejecting them all. Considered as mere mythes, the traditions about the Pelasgi are sufficiently interesting to deserve repetition at any rate. The old story, for instance, which represented them as a people specially persecuted by the wrath of the gods, has something very impressive and poetical in it. Michelet, who never lets a legend lose any of its romance in passing through his hands, has worked it up in a series of striking tableaux.

The classical passage respecting the Pelasgic tongue, and the few places where it was yet spoken in the time of Herodotus, is the fifty-seventh chapter of Clio: —

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\* That *Larissa* is "the city of the *Lar*," or prince, and that the *Tyrseni* derived their name of "tower-builders" (*τύρραις, τὺρρηδαι, turris*.) from their architectural propensities, seem to us as natural and well-founded case of ethnical etymology as any on record.

\*\* It is but fair to say, however, that Mr. Bunbury, an accurate and accomplished scholar, whose opinions are formed on his own observation of the country, has come to the same conclusion respecting the Cyclopean remains in Italy. *Classical Museum*, vol. ii., p. 147.



"What language the Pelasgians spoke I am not able positively to affirm. But if one must give an opinion, arguing from \* the Pelasgians still extant at present, those who inhabit the town of Creston beyond the Tyrseni, (who were once neighbors to the people now called Dorians, and then dwelt in the territory now called Thessalio-tis,) and those who founded Placia and Scylace on the Hellespont, (who were fellow-inhabitants with the Athenians,) and all the other towns which were Pelasgic, and changed their name — if one must give an opinion arguing from these, the Pelasgi spoke a barbarian language. If then all the Pelasgians were like these, the Athenians who were Pelasgi must have changed their language along with their transformation into an Hellenic people; for we know that the Crestonians do not speak the same tongue with any of those who live around them, neither do the Placians, but they speak the same with each other. It is clear, then, that they have preserved the same characteristic form of speech (γλώσσης χαρακτῆρα) which they brought with them on emigrating into these places."

This seems tolerably plain; yet in the face of it O. Muller lays down as a fundamental hypothesis that "the Pelasgi were Greeks, and spoke the Grecian language."\*\* We shall not enter into an examination of his *reasons* for so doing, preferring to quote Dr. Thirlwall's opinion, both because it falls more immediately within our present purpose to compare him with Mr. Grote, and because this comparison furnishes an amusing instance of the directly opposite inferences which two learned men will draw from the very same passage: —

"This language Herodotus describes as barbarous, and it is on this fact he grounds his general conclusion as to the ancient Pelasgian tongue. But he has not entered into any details that might have served to ascertain the manner or degree in which it differed from the Greek. Still the expressions he uses would have appeared to imply that it was essentially foreign, had he not spoken quite as strongly in another passage, where it is impossible to ascribe a similar meaning to his words. In enumerating the dialects that prevailed among the Ionian Greeks, he observes that the Ionian cities in Lydia agree not at all in their tongue with those of Caria; and he applies the very same term to these dialects, which he had before used in

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\* Mr. Grote quotes *τεχμαιρομένοις* for *τεχμαιρόμενον*, probably a misprint.

\*\* Muller's Dorians, i. 1-5.



speaking of the remains of the Pelasgian language.\* This passage affords a measure by which we may estimate the force of the word *barbarian* in the former. Nothing more can be safely inferred from it, than that the Pelasgian language which Herodotus heard on the Hellespont and elsewhere, sounded to him a strange jargon, as did the dialect of Ephesus to a Milesian, and as the Bolognese does to a Florentine." — (Thirlwall, vol. i., p. 53.)

Mr. Grote, after some judicious remarks upon the improbability of one language being totally displaced by another, as Herodotus supposed to be the case with the Pelasgian in Attica, accepts with confidence the Greek historian's statement of what he heard with his own ears — the barbaric language spoken by the Pelasgi extant in his day — and observes on Thirlwall's softening away of this statement: "To suppose that a man who, like Herodotus, had heard almost every variety of Greek in the course of his long travels, as well as Egyptian, Phœnician, Assyrian, Lydian and other languages, did not know how to distinguish bad Hellenic from non-Hellenic, is, in my judgment, inadmissible; at any rate, the supposition is not to be adopted without more cogent evidence than any which is here found." And he continues the argument in a note, with his usual accuracy of discrimination: —

"The words *γλώσσης χαρακτήρ* (distinctive mode of speech) are common to both these passages, [of Herodotus,] but their meaning in the one and the other is to be measured by reference to the subject-matter of which the author is speaking, as well as to the words which accompany them — especially the word *βάρβαρος* in the first passage. Nor can I think, with Dr. Thirlwall, that the meaning of *βάρβαρος* is to be determined by reference to the other two words: the reverse is in my judgment correct. *Βάρβαρος* is a term definite and unequivocal, but *γλώσσης χαρακτήρ* varies according to the comparison which you happen at the moment to be making, and its meaning is here determined by its conjunction with *βάρβαρος*. When Herodotus was speaking of the twelve Ionic cities in Asia, he might properly point out the differences of speech among them, as

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\* The passage referred to here by Dr. Thirlwall is in Clio, 142, where Herodotus says of the Ionic Greek cities, that "they do not all use the same tongue, but four different varieties." Miletus, Myus and Priene have one, Ephesus, Colophon, Lebedus, Teos, Clazomenæ and Phocœa another, the Chians and Erythræans a third, and the Samians a fourth. „These are their four characteristic forms of speech."



so many different *χαρακτῆρες γλώσσης*; the limits of differences were fixed by the knowledge which his hearers possessed of the persons about whom he was speaking; the Ionians being all notoriously Hellenes. So too an author describing Italy might say that Bolognese, Romans, Neapolitans, Genoese, &c., had different *χαρακτῆρες γλώσσης*; it being understood that the difference was such as might subsist among persons all Italians. But there is also a *χαρακτῆρ γλώσσης* of Greek generally (abstraction made of its various dialects and diversities) as contrasted with Persian, Phœnician or Latin — and of Italian generally, as contrasted with German or English. It is this comparison which Herodotus is taking when he describes the language spoken by the people of Kréstōn and Plakia, and which he notes by the word *βαρβαρον* as opposed to *Ἑλληνικόν*: it is with reference to this comparison that *χαρακτῆρ γλώσσης* in the fiftyseventh chapter is to be construed. The word *βαρβαρος* is the usual and recognized antithesis of *Ἕλλην* or *Ἑλληνικός*. Is not the least remarkable part of the statement of Herodotus, that the language spoken at Kréstōn and at Plakia was the same, though the places were so far apart from each other. This identity of itself shows that he meant to speak of a substantive language, not of a strange jargon. I think it, therefore, certain, that Herodotus pronounces the Pelasgians of his day to speak a substantive language different from Greek; but whether differing from it in a greater or less degree, (e. g. in the degree of Latin or of Phœnician,) we have no means of deciding." — Grote, vol. ii. Note on pp. 352, 353.

The *barbaric* or non-Hellenic character of the Pelasgian language has then the best grounds for being admitted as a fact. But it is curious to observe, that while this fact breaks up many of the supposed affinities between the Pelasgi and the historical Greeks, it seems to strengthen their connection with another people of authentic history — the Etrusci. One of the standard objections to the Pelasgic origin of the Etrusci is, that if their language were Pelasgian we ought to be able to trace in the Etruscan inscriptions extant some decided similitude to Greek, and no such resemblance can be discovered.\* But the supposition that Pelasgic and Greek

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\* Malden, p. 76. Niebuhr, vol. i., p. III.

Of the Etruscan language, scarcely anything is known with certainty.

The words which we find quoted by Festus, Varro and other Roman authorities, are (even supposing those authorities unexceptionable) independent nouns, throwing no light on the structure of the tongue; and from the inscriptions nothing has been gathered except



(i. e. Hellenic) were different languages, removes this difficulty at once. The speculation is an interesting one, but to pursue it here, would involve us in too long a digression, especially as we have yet to notice Mr. Grote's other and most important conclusion respecting the Pelasgi, in which we also coincide with him, viz., that it is impossible to determine which (if any) of the elements of Hellenic civilization and character are referable to them.

The Hellenic national characteristics — those distinguishing institutions and habits which prevailed among the Greeks generally in spite of local differences — are well summed up by Mr. Grote: community of sacrifices and religious festivals; traditional community of blood; a sturdy spirit of individual independence, strongly contrasting with the Asiatic feeling of unlimited obedience to one man; the non-existence of polygamy and child-traffic; a religious horror of castration, and generally of all mutilation of the person, alive or dead; on the other hand, exposure of the person in gymnastic contests, &c., which the Eastern nations regarded as most unseemly.\* If we were asked what was the most striking trait of Hellenic character — that which explains and includes the greatest number of their national peculiarities — we should say that it was their respect for the human body, for the mere physical person. The human form was something sacred to them. Hence they regarded the Eastern punishments of cutting off the hands and feet, putting out the eyes, and the practice (for it was not even exclusively a punishment) of castration, not merely as barbarities, but as positive impieties. Hence, too, the immense importance they attached to the burial of the

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that *aiñl ril* or *avil ril* means *visit annos*, or *annos visit*, for antiquarians have not been able to satisfy themselves which is which. Donaldson's attempts to explain the inscriptions (*Varronianus*, ch. 5) are more ingenious than satisfactory. Take, as rather a favorable specimen of them, *ril*, a year, connected with *ῥέω*, to flow, from the regular flowing of time!

\* Herodotus, Clio, 10, (the story of Gyges and Candaules) "For with the Lydians, and we may say with all the other barbarian nations, it is a great disgrace even for a man to be seen naked." An analogous difference in European and Asiatic ideas of propriety is observable at the present day. The tight dress of the Frank is an abomination to the Moslem: it has the same effect to him that the appearance of woman in man's clothes has to us.



dead, and the whole treatment of the corpse after death. With this was naturally connected the cultivation of physical excellence, and the study of physical beauty: so far from the form being concealed as something to be ashamed of, it was rather to be exhibited and contemplated. We see the highest development of this feeling in the anthropomorphic character of their religion, and its expression in their marvellous works of art; but the germ of the sentiment is traceable before art existed: it runs through the whole Homeric psychology. With Homer the body is the man; the souls are mere shades that flit about. The life of the poorest laborer on earth is preferable to a sovereignty in the realms below. We detect this in the very first lines of the *Iliad*. Achilles' wrath has sent many brave souls of heroes to *Hades*, and made *themselves* a prey to dogs. Here a modern writer would directly reverse the personality.

Now how far can this, or any other trait of Grecian character and civilization, be deduced from the Pelasgi? Malden thinks that the physical element was Hellenic, and the intellectual Pelasgic.\* And certainly, according to tradition, the Athenians were of almost pure Pelasgic descent. But then it is also traditionary that some of the rudest and least intellectual Greek tribes, such as the Arcadians were, to use Malden's own words, "pure Pelasgians rendered Hellenic only by gradual assimilation to their neighbors." So that here we are at a dead lock. The only thing really known about the civilization of the Pelasgi is, that they were people of an architectural turn, who built massive fortifications; beyond this we have no right to affirm anything positively. That part of the Greek institutions where there is most hope of our being able to detect and separate the Pelasgian element, is their theology. Thus there seems good reason to suppose that Apollo was the original chief divinity of the Hellenes, and that Zeus (Jupiter) whose headquarters at Dodona are unanimously allowed to be Pelasgic, was adopted by them from the Pelasgi. But this distinction, even if thoroughly established throughout, would lead to nothing certain beyond itself.

We are not sorry to quit this perplexing theme, and

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\* History of Rome, p. 70.



hasten on to the next resting place — the foundation of the Spartan commonwealth, and the institutions of Lycurgus; although Mr. Grote previously dispatches the early history of Argos, and in this respect his arrangement is to be preferred to Dr. Thirlwall's, as it is pretty evident that Argos was at first the leading power in the Peloponnesus, and that the ascendancy of Sparta was an event of later date. At this point, the proper commencement of our politico-historical inquiries, it is curious to note the different views and methods of proceeding adopted by our two historians. Both are disposed to be critical and skeptical, as our readers have already had abundant opportunity of perceiving; but their doubts take a different turn. Grote receives the institutions as having a definite reality and establishment at a very early period, but is incredulous about the law-giver, his opinion of whom coincides with Muller's, that "we have absolutely no account of him as an individual person." Thirlwall admits the personality of Lycurgus, and considers the chronological discrepancies in the various accounts of him inconsiderable, while he believes that every important part of the institutions had existed previous to his time, and that his work was one of readjustment, not of creation. Mr. Grote's view has this recommendation, if no other, that it is conformable to the method of dealing with the early Roman history adopted by Niebuhr and Arnold. With the able historian and panegyrist of the Dorians, C. O. Muller, our authors agree and disagree alternately. Grote, as we said above, follows him in regard to Lycurgus, but is directly opposed to him (and consequently to Thirlwall, whose opinion is substantially the same as Muller's) as to the non-peculiarity of the Spartan institutions. Muller, whose work displays throughout the strongest pro-oligarchical, pro-Dorian and anti-Ionian bias, represents the laws of Sparta as the true Doric institutions, and Sparta as the full Doric type. The only authority he deigns to give for this is a passage in *Pindar*, which we cannot dismiss better than in Mr. Grote's words, that "it is scarcely of any value."\* Thirlwall's modified position, that many of the individual Spartan institutions may be traced in other Doric states, is no

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\* Muller's Dorians, iii., 1, 8. Grote, ii. 456.



wise inconsistent with the assertion that there were also elements of the Lycurgan constitution peculiar to itself. We may suppose that Lycurgus detected those qualities in the Dorian character, which rendered it particularly well adapted to receive certain institutions; while, as Mr. Grote well observes, it was the very singularity of these institutions that made them work so impressively on the Grecian mind. Thus both sides are partially right: Muller in the theory that the Dorians generally had a capacity for a military-oligarchical system of government; Grote in the fact that Sparta was the only Doric state in which this idea was fully developed. The people whose institutions most nearly resembled those of Sparta were the Cretans. On this resemblance it may be interesting to compare two distinguished authorities, Aristotle and Polybius. The former observes: —

"The social arrangements of the Cretans are analogous to those of the Laconians; for the latter have their ground cultivated by Helots, and the former by Perioeci, and both have public tables; indeed, the Laconians used to call these tables, not *phiditia* as now, but *andria*, as the Cretans do, whence it is evident that this custom came from Crete. The political arrangements are also analogous, for the Ephori correspond exactly to the officers called *Cosmi* in Crete, except that the Ephori are five in number, and the *Cosmi* ten; and the Laconian Senate is equivalent to the Cretan Council. The office of king formerly existed in Crete: afterwards it was abolished, and the *Cosmi* have the chief command in war. All have a right to vote at the popular assembly, but this assembly has no power to do anything except ratify the decrees of the Council and *Cosmi*. The public messes are better managed by the Cretans than by the Laconians, for in Lacedæmon each individual contributes his appointed portion, and if he fail to do this, the law excludes him from participating in the privileges of citizenship; but in Crete, the produce of the earth, the cattle, the public revenues, and the tributes paid by the *Perioeci*, are all appropriated, one half for religious expenses and other public services, the other for the public tables, so that all, men, women, and children, are supported from a common fund.\* . . . But the institution of the *Cosmi* is even worse than that of the Ephori; for the main evil of the Ephoralty, namely, that the election is a mere matter of chance, is also true of the *Cosmi*, but the compensating expedient

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\* A tolerable approximation to Fourierism, which did not prevent the Cretans from being terribly quarrelsome and disorderly among themselves, as we learn from this very same chapter of Aristotle a little further on.



which exists in the former case, does not exist in the latter. In Lacedæmon, as the office is open to all, the people, having a share in the supreme authority, desire the maintenance of the constitution; but the Cretans choose their Cosmi, not from the whole people, but from certain families, and the Council from those who have served as Cosmi." \*

Polybius wonders "how the most distinguished prose writers of antiquity could have said that the Cretan government was similar to, nay, identical with the Lacedæmonian," and proceeds to mention three very important points of difference: —

"The peculiarities of the Lacedæmonian constitution are, first, the regulations respecting the acquisition of land, of which no one has more than another, but all the citizens must have an equal share of the territory belonging to the state; secondly, their estimation of money, the pursuit of which was from the first dishonorable among them, and consequently, rivalry in wealth has been entirely extirpated from the community; thirdly, that the Lacedæmonian kings preserve an hereditary succession, and the senators hold office for life, and these two manage all state affairs. But with the Cretans everything is the very opposite of this, for their laws suffer every man to acquire as much land as he can, and money is prized by them to such a degree, that the acquisition of it is considered not only necessary but most meritorious. And generally, the tendency to mean traffic and avarice is so prevalent in the country, that the Cretans alone of all men see nothing base in money-making. Moreover, their offices are annual, and their government arranged on democratic principles." \*\*

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\* Politics, ii. 10.

\*\* Polybius, vi. 45-6. The historian's astonishment that a people should see nothing disgraceful in the acquisition of money, is in accordance with the spirit of antiquity. Mr. Grote, in the appendix to his chapter on the Solonian Constitution, (iii. 215,) after tracing the gradual change of moral feeling in this respect, adds, that to do so is highly instructive, "the more so as that general basis of sentiment of which the antipathy against lending money on interest is only a particular case, still prevails largely in society, and directs the current of moral approbation and disapprobation. With many, the principle of reciprocity in human dealings appears, when conceived in theory, odious and contemptible, and goes by some bad name, such as egoism, selfishness, calculation, political economy, &c.; the only sentiment which they will admit in theory is, that the man who has, ought to be ready at all times to give away what he has to him who has not, *while the latter is encouraged to expect and require such gratuitous donation.*"

Exactly the social economy of the Sue and Dickens school. It is worthy of observation also, that some of the most enlightened nations of the present day have not yet got rid of those barbarous absurdities, the Usury Laws.



Of the three peculiarities here specified, the existence of the first is, as we shall soon see, exceedingly problematical; the consequence of the second was directly the reverse of what Polybius represents, for the Spartans came to be remarkably venal and avaricious;\* the third, if correctly stated as regards the Cretans, certainly constitutes an important difference. It must be borne in mind, that Aristotle is comparing *analogous* institutions, and the state which he considers analogous to Crete and Lacedæmon, is *Carthage*, which certainly had nothing Doric or Spartan in its national character or social institutions, though some of its political institutions resembled the Spartan — the diarchy, for instance, though even here the resemblance was by no means complete, as the suffetes, so far from succeeding hereditarily, were not even chosen for life. On a similar system of partial comparison, we might class the British government with those of Spain and Prussia, in respect of its principle of hereditary succession to the chief magistracy, and with our own in respect of its representative system, free press, freedom of travel without passports, &c. So, too, we might call the Norwegian government a monarchy or a democracy, looking at it from different points of view. The Spartan government itself was arranged by the Greek political writers, sometimes in one class of governments, sometimes in another; nay, the aristocratical or democratic force of particular elements in it is variously represented: thus in the passage of Aristotle above quoted, the Ephoralty is represented as a democratic institution, while in Plato's *Laws*, (iv. 112,) one of the speakers says that this institution of the Ephori is "marvellously despotic," (θραυμαστὸν ὡς τυραννικόν.)

Indeed, these Ephori are very troublesome people to deal with. That from being a subordinate magistracy of some sort, they managed to engross the chief power

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\* "Lycurgus does not try to make the poor rich, nor the rich poor; but he imposes upon both the same subjugating drill — the same habits of life, gentleman-like idleness and unlettered strength — the same fare, clothing, labors, privations, endurance, punishments and subordination. It is a lesson instructive, at least, however unsatisfactory to political students, that with all this equality of dealing, he ends in creating a community in whom the love of money stands powerfully and specially developed." Grote, vol. ii. p. 548.



in the state, is well known, but the details respecting them are very vague and contradictory. On this point, neither of our historians are as full as we could wish. Thirlwall says scarcely anything; and we are surprised that Mr. Grote has made not the least allusion to the theory advocated by Muller and others, that the Ephors were originally a *civil* court, who gradually usurped criminal jurisdiction, and through criminal jurisdiction, political power. "It was the regular course of events in the Grecian states, that the civil courts enlarged their influence, while the power of the criminal courts was continually on the decline. As in Athens, the *Heliaea* rose, as compared with the *Areopagus*, so in Sparta, the power of the Ephors increased in comparison with that of the *Gerusia*." \* This view is rendered extremely probable by a comparison of Aristotle's, (which Muller must have had in his mind, though he does not directly cite it,) where he says distinctly, that the magistracy of the *hundred and four* at Carthage closely resembled the Ephori, except that the mode of election was different. \*\* Now we know that the *hundred and four* was a civil court, and the great difference in the numbers of the two bodies is only proportioned to the difference in the population of the two states. † Thirlwall seems to incline to Muller's opinion, for he states that the Ephors "appear from the first to have exercised a jurisdiction and superintendence over the Spartans in their civil concerns." We must be careful, however, not to involve in our adoption of this position the reception of another which Muller connects with it, namely, that the Ephors were the "agents and plenipotentiaries of the popular assembly," answering to demagogues and exercising a democratic tyranny. His motive for wishing to make this out is clear enough. That the rule of the Ephori came to be tyrannical and mischievous, all authorities are agreed; and, of course, it is a great point for him if he can put all this evil on the head of his *bête noire*, democracy. But there is really no reason to suppose that the popular assembly, in which there was no discussion, and not often

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\* Muller's *Dorians*, iii. 7, 4.

\*\* *Politics*, ii. 11.

† Heeren's *African Nations*, chap. 3.



a division, ever had any independent weight, much less predominance, in the government; and the indisputable fact, that when Agis III. and Cleomenes III. wished to reform the government on the most democratic basis, the principal resistance offered to them was by the Ephori, is utterly irreconcilable with Muller's supposition. If it were perfectly certain that these officers were chosen upon the most democratic principles from among the people, as he states, it would certainly give plausibility to his argument, but even this is by no means clear. How they were elected is very uncertain. *Not* by lot, for Aristotle's testimony is positive to the effect that *no* officers were appointed by lot in Sparta, yet Plato speaks of the Ephoralty as closely approximating to an office appointed by lot, (*ἐγγύς τῆς κληρωτῆς δυνάμεως*.) Elsewhere Aristotle speaks of the manner of election as "particularly childish."\*. Our own suspicion is, that there was some *dodge* about the matter, some specious contrivance, which pretended to give the choice to the people, but really lodged it with the oligarchy. A contrivance of this kind would be favored by the secrecy of the Spartan government, which was notoriously close and silent in all its transactions — as much so as that of Venice or Russia. And this incidental mention of Venice reminds us of a not inapposite illustration of our meaning, a plan most elaborately fair in appearance, but practically amounting to no security against the evils which it was supposed to prevent — we mean the method of electing the doge; the working of which is thus described by Lord Brougham: —

"In 1249 a new and very complicated manner of exercising the elective power was devised, which continued to be practiced as long as the republic lasted; that is, till the year 1798. First of all, thirty of the Council were drawn by lot, and these again were reduced by lot to nine, who selected, by a majority of seven, at least, of their number, forty of the Council, and those were by lot reduced to twelve. These twelve elected twenty-five of the Council, which were reduced by lot to nine, and the nine selected forty-five, of whom eleven drawn by lot selected forty-one of the Council to be electors of the doge. A majority of twenty-five of these electors required to join in choosing the doge. The prevailing view in this combination of choice and chance must have been twofold — to prevent the combination of par-

\* Aristot. Polit., ii. 6, iv. 7, 5. Plato, Leg., iii. p. 692.



means, and thus neutralize or weaken party influence, and to prevent the knowledge of the parties who should elect, and thus frustrate or obstruct the exercise of bribery or other undue influence. The first of these objects could not be at all secured by the contrivance, the second could only be most imperfectly attained. 1. In order to try its effect upon party, we must suppose two or more factions to divide the great Council; suppose, too, an aristocratic, which for shortness we shall call the Whigs, and a monarchical, the Tories, and first, suppose them unequal in the proportion of two to one. The chances are, that the first lot gives twenty Whigs to ten Tories, and the second, six Whigs to three Tories. As seven must then concur to choose the forty, it is certain that the minority may make terms; but nothing can be so improbable, as that they should obtain, by holding out, any proportion of the forty which could affect usefully for their purpose the next or fourth operation, the lot reducing the forty to twelve; for unless they get so many of the forty as to give them a fair chance of having seven out of the twelve, they do nothing, a bare majority of the twelve being enough to choose the twenty-five by the fifth operation. The twenty-five then will be all Whigs, and so will of course the nine to which they are reduced by lot. These by the seventh operation will choose eleven Whigs, whom the lot reducing to eight, these eight will choose forty-one, all Whigs, twenty-five of whom will therefore by the tenth and last operation choose a Whig doge. In fact, the whole result is certain, notwithstanding the complication after the two first lots; and the complication then becomes useless. \* \* \* 2. It may be admitted that the lot threw some impediment in the way of corruption and intimidation, preventing those undue influences from being used towards the greater number of the Council. When, however, the thirty were once drawn and then reduced to nine, it is not easy to see how those nine should be exempt from the arts of the candidates. Even if they were to vote secretly, the bargain might be made by the candidate or his party that the bribe should only be paid if earned, that is, upon the final election taking place. If we suppose seven of the nine to be thus bought, it is clear that they could secure the event by choosing as many of the forty as made it certain a majority of the twelve should be friendly, and then the election was certain, always supposing, as we have done, that there were a sufficient number of sure votes in the Council itself." — Political Philosophy, vol. II., pp. 269, 299.

Such a system certainly seems to us *παιδαριώδης* *λίαν*, but it was once lauded as the highest refinement of political wisdom. And that some such trickery, some specious and delusive plan which looked like an open election, but in reality was not, governed the election of Ephori, we more than half suspect.



Another hypothetical ultra-democratic institution of Sparta, Mr. Grote totally disbelieves in, though it is generally spoken of as one of the fundamental enactments of Lycurgus — the alleged redivision, namely, and equal distribution of landed property. His arguments on this point, which are exceedingly clear and forcible, are briefly these: That all historical evidences show decided inequality of property among the Spartans; that the historical and political writers who treated of the Spartan constitution previous to Aristotle, viz., Hellenicus, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon and Plato, say nothing of this equal distribution; and that Aristotle, in discussing the scheme of equality of possessions, expressly mentions Phaleas of Chalcedon as the author of it. He concludes that the idea must have originated in the reveries of Agis and Cleomenes and their reforming friends. It is certainly unfortunate for the "land-reformers" and "vote-yourself-a-farm" people, that the precedents in ancient history to which they sometimes appeal, should turn out, on examination, to be no precedents at all. Thus the famous Licinian law at Rome, so long supposed to limit the amount of real estate which an individual might own, has been proved to refer not to private property at all, but to the *occupation of public land* — *ager*, without any qualifying epithet, standing for *ager publicus*, and *possidere* being the technical term for *to occupy*. \* We have an idea (partly suggested by the term *πολιτικὴ χώρα* in the passage of Polybius which we have had occasion to quote) that there may have been a similar misapprehension in relation to Sparta; that there may have been a distribution of *public* land made among the poorer citizens. But as this is a mere conjecture founded only on analogy and a chance expression in one author, and not supported by any positive authority, we should never have ventured to express it, had we not found an almost identical opinion propounded by Dr. Thirlwall. He says: —

"If we suppose the inequality of property among the Spartans to have arisen chiefly from acts of usurpation, by which leading men had seized lands of the conquered Achæans, which belonged of right

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\* Such, at least, is now the opinion of scholars throughout England, and all over Germany, except to use Niebuhr's own expression „in some obscure and isolated corners of Austria."



to the state, their resumption might afford the means at once of correcting an evil which disturbed the internal tranquillity of Sparta, and of redressing a wrong which provoked discontent among her subjects. The kings, we are informed, (Xenoph. de Lac. Rep. c. 15,) had domains in the districts of several provincial towns; similar acquisitions may have been made by many private Spartans before the time of Lycurgus; and his partition may have consisted chiefly in the restoration and distribution of such lands." (Vol. i., p., 305.)

Mr. Grote, however, rejects this supposition as "altogether gratuitous."

Whatever opinion our readers may think it worth their while to adopt on the many disputed points connected with the Spartan government, a few of which we have been tempted briefly to examine, they will probably be disposed to coincide in Mr. Grote's designation of it, as "a close, unscrupulous and well-obeyed oligarchy." With this oligarchy the Athenian constitution, republican as constituted by Solon, purely democratic as re-constituted by Clisthenes, who "took the commons into partnership," stands in marked contrast. In neither of our historians do we find the fashionable comparison of the merits of these two celebrated governments; but Mr. Grote evidently has something of the kind in view, and from an intimation he gives us of his intention to defend the most notorious Athenian demagogues, Cleon and Hyperbolus, he may be expected to take the extreme Athenian side. The great argument in favor of the Spartan constitution is its stability, a test which would make the Chinese polity the best on earth. Stability may be the accident of a liberal government like the English, or a despotic government like the Russian; it is not absolutely and necessarily desirable of itself. If a government is decidedly bad, its stability is only an additional evil: the best thing that we can wish for such a government, is that it should be unstable. Heaven forbid that we should do anything to underrate or palliate that fickle and hasty legislation, which has too often been the curse of popular governments, and led many a man to adopt in bitterness of spirit, the sentiment which Thucydides puts into the mouth of one of his characters, that "a city with worse laws, if immovable, is preferable to one with good laws that be not binding;" but it were folly to run into the other extreme, and make a blind conservatism atone for



all sins of omission or commission. The barbarous cruelty of the Spartans to their serfs, their savage illiberality to strangers as exhibited in the *Xenelasia*, their systematic ignorance and discouragement of all art, and literature, and eloquence, of all talent except military, are too well known to need more than a passing allusion. The best thing to be said of them — and it certainly is very much to their credit — is that the Spartan women were admitted into something like their legitimate sphere, and not treated as mere pieces of household furniture, according to the practice of most nations of that time. And yet, after all, this liberty could only improve the *physique* of the race, without aiding them morally\* or intellectually, since the women were no better off for education than the men, all the Lacedæmonians being illiterate on principle. Illiterate on principle — how much lies in these few words! If the Athenians had been like the Spartans, how much should we have had of Greek philosophy, or history, or poetry? Should we even have had Homer preserved for us? Nay, further, what would have been the effect on the Roman mind, which was conquered by conquered Athens? What upon the modern nations, who in their turn received the impulse from Rome? The inquiry may be extended indefinitely. Spartan fortitude has indeed passed into a proverb; but the influence of Athens on the human intellect is bounded only by the limits of civilization.

The preservation of the regal office was peculiar to Sparta. In the other Greek states the regular course was from monarchy to oligarchy, and through oligarchy, with occasional interludes of usurpation by a despot, to democracy. We have here a wide field for political speculation and remark. Thirlwall has done little more than translate and explain Aristotle, but he has done this admirably.

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\* In admitting the superior virtue of the Lacedæmonian women both our historians have rather hastily followed Muller. We think that they are a little too charitable, and that Mr. St. John, in his *Manners and Customs of Ancient Greece*, has come nearer the mark. We may distrust the gossip of Athenæus, but Plato and Xenophon are pretty good authorities, and the latter especially a most unwilling witness against the Spartans.



For the best picture of such a democracy in its social and every-day workings, we must have recourse to Plato: —

"When, methinks, a democratic state, thirsting for liberty, has bad servants to supply it, and becomes intoxicated with a too deep and unmixed draught; then, unless its rulers are very yielding and afford it much license, it charges them with being wicked aristocrats, and punishes them." "You are right, said he, for that is what they do." "And those who obey the rulers," I continued, "it insults, as voluntary slaves and men of no account; and it praises and honors the rulers for being like subjects, and subjects for being like rulers. Must they not go to the extremity of freedom in such a state?" "Of course." "And this inherent anarchy," I went on, "extends itself to private houses, and finally descends even to animals." "I do not perfectly understand you," he observed. "For instance," said I, "the father will grow like a boy and be afraid of his sons, and the son like a father, and have neither reverence nor fear for his parents, to show how free he is; and the resident alien is as good as a native citizen, and the native citizen no better than a resident alien, nay, than an absolute foreigner." "I am afraid it is so," said he. "Yes, it is so," said I, "and some other little things like this happen: the teacher is afraid of his scholars, and flatters them, and the scholars despise their teacher; and generally the youth imitate old men, and rival them in words and actions, while the old men, letting themselves down to a level with the youth, become very witty and obliging, in imitation of the young, so as not to appear unpleasant or tyrannical." He assented. "And the last stage, my good sir, of this freedom of the many, as it prevails in such a state, is when servants are on a complete equality with their masters; and I had nearly forgotten to mention the point to which they carry the political equality of the sexes and the free participation of woman in public affairs. \* \* \* And as regards the animals subject to man, no one would believe without seeing it how much freer they are there than elsewhere; for it is literally according to the proverb, 'Love me, love my dog,' and the very horses and asses are wont to roam about in all the majesty of freedom, running over every one they meet in the streets who does not get out of their way; and all other creatures have a corresponding surfeit of liberty. \* \* \* And you can comprehend the result of all these things together: the popular mind is made tender and irritable, so that if one endeavors to put the least amount of restraint upon it, it frets and will not bear it; and ultimately, you know, they take no care of law or precedent, that no one may be their master any way." — Republic, 562-3.

That much of this pungently satirical description was directly suggested to Plato by the existing state of



things in Athens, we can hardly help supposing; and such sketches help us considerably toward the solution of that perplexing problem, why so many of the most eminent Athenians, especially the leading Socratics, openly preferred the constitution of Sparta, odious as that constitution seems to us. It is but human nature to exaggerate the inconveniences which we ourselves suffer. Had Plato, as a Spartan citizen, personally experienced the disadvantages of Spartan rule, the tables might have been turned: and we might have had from his pen a picture equally able, and still more repulsive, of an illiterate and oppressive oligarchy. We are not afraid of having Xenophon's case quoted against us. A gentleman of reputation, leaving his country for political reasons, is not likely to form an impartial judgment on the institutions of the people among whom he finds an asylum; the less so because they, feeling flattered by his preference, pet him in return, and are anxious to make everything appear to the best advantage before him. But we are anticipating a subject on which we hope to say more on some future occasion, when Mr. Grote comes to speak of it. Returning from the digression into which Thirlwall's remarks on the Greek government led us, we will dip into Grote's chapter on the same subject, at the point where he is examining the anti-monarchical feeling of ancient Greece: —

"It is important to show that the monarchical institutions and monarchical tendencies prevalent throughout mediæval and modern Europe have been both generated and perpetuated by causes peculiar to those societies, whilst in the Hellenic societies, such causes had no place; in order that we may approach Hellenic phenomena in the proper spirit, and with an impartial estimate of the feeling universal among Greeks towards the idea of a king. The primitive sentiment entertained towards the heroic king died out, passing first into indifference, next — after experience of the despots — into determined antipathy. To an historian like Mr. Mitford, full of English ideas respecting government, this anti-monarchical feeling appears of the nature of insanity, and the Grecian communities like madmen without a keeper; while the greatest of all benefactors is the hereditary king who conquers them from without; the second best is the home despot, who seizes the Acropolis and puts his fellow-citizens under coercion. There cannot be a more certain way of misinterpreting and distorting Grecian phenomena than to read them in this



spirit, which reverses the maxims, both of prudence and morality, current in the ancient world. The hatred of kings as is stood among the Greeks (whatever may be thought about a similar feeling now) was a pre-eminent virtue, flowing directly from the noblest and wisest part of their nature: it was a consequence of their deep conviction of the necessity of universal legal restraint; it was a direct expression of that regulated sociality, which required the control of individual passion from every one without exception, and most of all, from him to whom power was confided. The conception which the Greeks formed of an irresponsible one, or of a king who could do no wrong, may be expressed in the pregnant words of Herodotus: 'He subverts the customs of the country; he violates women; he puts men to death without trial.' No other conception of the probable tendencies of kingship was justified either by a general knowledge of human nature, or by political experience as it stood from Solon downward: no other feeling than abhorrence could be entertained for the character so conceived: no other than a man of unprincipled ambition would ever seek to invest himself with it. Our larger political experience has taught us to modify this opinion, by showing, that under the conditions of monarchy in the best governments of modern Europe, the enormities described by Herodotus do not take place, and that it is possible by means of representative constitutions, acting under a certain force of manners, customs and historical recollection, to obviate many of the mischiefs likely to flow from proclaiming the duty of peremptory obedience to an hereditary and irresponsible king, who cannot be changed without extra-constitutional force. But such larger observation was not open to Aristotle, the wisest as well as the most cautious of ancient theorists; nor if it had been open, could he have applied with assurance its lessons to the governments of the single cities of Greece. The theory of a constitutional king, especially as it exists in England, would have appeared to him impracticable: to establish a king who will reign without governing, in whose name all government is carried on, yet whose personal will is in practice of little or no effect; exempt from all responsibility without making use of the exemption; receiving from every one unmeasured demonstrations of homage, which are never translated into act except within the bounds of a known law; surrounded with all the paraphernalia of power, yet acting as a passive instrument in the hands of ministers marked out for his choice by indications which he is not at liberty to resist. This remarkable combination of the fiction of superhuman grandeur and license with the reality of an invisible straight waistcoat, is what an Englishman has in his mind when he speaks of a constitutional king: the events of our history have brought it to pass in England, amidst an aristocracy the most powerful that the world has yet seen, but we have still to learn whether it can be made to



exist elsewhere, or whether the occurrence of a single king at once able, aggressive, and resolute, may not suffice to break it up." — Vol. III., pp. 15, *seq.*

That last sentence suggests some interesting speculations. There certainly are many supposable cases in which the real power and influence of an English monarch might have been, or may be, brought to a violent trial. If anything had happened to Queen Victoria while she was Princess Victoria, Ernest of Hanover would certainly have undertaken to govern England on ultra-tory principles; but as that personage is not so "able" as "aggressive," he would probably have been put down without much difficulty. Or suppose that the present king-consort had united with his personal advantages, intellectual endowments of a high order, and an ambitious spirit — that he had made himself his wife's master, instead of her dependant — that he had in her name taken hold of political affairs — played off the Protectionists and Free-traders against each other — or given a head and a nucleus to some doubtful interest, "Young England," for instance — might not the personal influence of the crown have made itself sensibly felt in British politics? Might not the antagonist forces have stopped the machine altogether, and rendered a reconstruction of the frame of government indispensable? There is nothing very extravagant in the supposition, that at some period the sovereign of Great Britain may be a man of great ability and energy, and — so much do "circumstances alter cases" — it is possible that the presence of these qualities in an English executive may be as productive of awkward consequences as the absence of them sometimes is in our own.

Having thus far spoken of Mr. Grote's work in the highest terms, particularly for its lively and attractive style, we are now compelled to express our disappointment at the jejune and summary way in which he has narrated some of the most interesting episodes in Grecian history — the stories relating to the early princes, and especially those told by Herodotus. The substantial authenticity of these narratives he admits, and accordingly mentions their more important details, but with such rapidity that all the romance of the tale vanishes. One instance of this has struck us remarkably — the story



of Periander's quarrel with his son, which, in Mr. Grote's *abridgment*, reads like a scrap of an old newspaper. The original legend is so touching and poetical, that we are tempted to translate it *verbatim*, though well aware that no words of ours can convey a proper impression of the Ionic historian's beautiful language: —

"After that Periander had slain his own wife, Melissa, upon that mishap there befel him this other: he had two sons from Melissa, one seventeen, one eighteen years old; these, their mother's father, Procles, that was sovereign of Epidaurus, sent for to himself and treated lovingly, as was but natural, since they were his own daughter's sons; but when he sent them away, he said, on speeding them, Do ye know, my sons, who it was that slew your mother? This word the elder of them made of no account, but the younger, Lycophron by name, was so grieved at the hearing it, that when he came to Corinth he neither saluted his father, (for that he was the slayer of his mother,) nor joined in converse with him, nor answered word to his questioning, until that Periander, possessed with wrath, drove him forth from the palace. And having driven him forth, he inquired of the elder what their grandfather had told them, whereunto the boy replied that he had received them lovingly, but the word that Procles had said, on dismissing them, he remembered not, for he had not taken it to heart. Then Periander said it might not be but that he had given them some secret counsel, and he pressed him with questions; so the other remembered it, and told the speech. Then Periander, perceiving this, and willing to yield nothing, sent a messenger to those with whom the son whom he had driven out was dwelling, and forbade them to entertain him; therefore, when he was expelled from that house and went to another, he was driven from that also, for Periander threatened his hosts and bade them shut him out. Yet he went to another house of his friends, and they received him, as being the son of Periander, though they were in fear. At last, Periander made proclamation that whosoever should admit him into his house, or speak to him, should pay a fine to Apollo, and the amount of the fine was stated; by reason of which proclamation, no one would speak to him nor receive him under his roof — nay, he himself designed not to attempt what was forbidden, but endured living in the public colonnades. But on the fourth day, Periander beholding him bowed down with squalidness and hunger, was moved to pity, and relaxing from his wrath, approached and accosted him. 'My son, which is preferable for thee, to fare as thou now dost, or to inherit the sovereignty and the good things which I now enjoy, by being friendly to thy father? Thou, who, being my son and the king of prosperous Corinth, hast chosen a wanderer's life in perversity,



indulging anger against him towards whom it least befitted thee; for if there hath happened any calamity for which thou holdest me in suspicion, it hath happened to me also, and I bear the greater share thereof, forasmuch as I myself did all. But do thou, now that thou hast learned how much better it is to be envied than to be pitied, and what it is to quarrel with thy parents and betters, depart hence, home.' With these words did Periander come upon him, but he answered his father nothing more than to say that he had incurred a fine to the god by entering into conversation with him. Then Periander, finding how unmanageable and invincible his son's disorder was, fitted out a ship for Corecra, which island he also ruled over, and sent him out of his sight. And afterward Periander made a campaign against his father-in-law, Procles, as the chief cause of his present difficulty, and took Epidaurus and Procles himself alive. But when, in the lapse of years, Periander had passed his prime, and was conscious of being no longer able to oversee and administer the government, he sent to Corecra and invited Lycophron to the sovereignty, (for he saw nothing in his elder son, who seemed to him witless;) but Lycophron deigned not even to give an answer to him that brought the message. Then Periander, for he cleaved to the youth, sent to him a second, his sister, his own daughter, thinking that he would be most likely to yield to her; she came and addressed him: 'Wouldst thou, my brother, that the sovereignty should fall to others, and thy father's house be scattered, rather than go thyself and enjoy them? Depart home; cease being thine own tormenter. Pride is a mischievous thing; try not to cure evil with evil. Many prefer feasibility to justice; and many seeking their mother's interests have thrown away their father's. The sovereignty is a slippery possession; many are desirous of it; he is already an old man and past his prime; give not thine own property to others.' Thus said she to him the most seductive things, as instructed by her father, but he said in answer that he would no wise come to Corinth while he knew that his father was alive. When she had reported this, Periander sent for the third time a herald, that he meant himself to come to Corecra, and he bade his son return to Corinth, to receive the sovereignty from him. As the youth agreed to these conditions, Periander prepared to sail to Corecra, and his son to Corinth; but the Corecraeans, on learning the change, slew the young man, that Periander might not come into their country." *Clio*, chap. 50-54.

Our bare and literal version will give some idea of what the story might be made, in the hands of an elegant writer. Of course it would not be possible or desirable that all the tales of Herodotus should be thus repeated at full length, but we cannot help thinking that



a few of them, narrated in suitable language, would add great interest to a history of this kind, and do much to further what ought to be one of the historian's chief objects — encouraging his readers to pursue their study further, and have recourse, when it is in their power, to the original authorities which he consults.

And now other nations come upon the stage, and particularly the people of the Great King, whose previous conquests and military reputation served so much to heighten the renown of the gallant little bands that victoriously resisted them. This glorious struggle has continually been the theme of the poet, the orator, and the patriot, and not without good reason, for it is a triumph unmatched in the pages of any history, except our own. In almost all the cases of regular battles gained against great odds, (we put surprises and ambuscades out of the question,) there have been some counterbalancing physical advantages on the side of the minority, some superior equipment, the result of superior civilization — armor, horses, firearms, or something of the sort unknown to the other party, and rendering the victory less wonderful. But in this instance, the accoutrements and military science and experience of the Persians seem to have been no way behind those of the Greeks; nay, in some departments of warfare, such as archery, it is probable that the Persians were the more skillful. The Greeks gave the fairest proof that they were, in Highland phraseology, "the prettier men." In describing these world-renowned battles, both Thirlwall and Grote have acquitted themselves well, but neither remarkably. Their accounts suffer on comparison with those magnificent pictures of Arnold, which give to Hannibal's campaigns all the interest of a new story. But to say that they fall short of Arnold is no great censure, nor can we feel disposed to blame them much, when we remember how often a "picturesque" historian is tempted to sacrifice accuracy to effect.

With the battle of Marathon terminates Mr. Grote's fourth volume, and here our article must terminate also. We wait with impatience for his observations on later Greek politics and philosophy, the more so because the increased interest and liveliness in the corresponding parts of Dr. Thirlwall's book, induce a hope that Mr. G. will,



in a similar manner, continue to rise with his subject. We have accomplished our main purpose, which was to supply, to the best of our small ability, a singular omission on the part of American reviewers. Here are two works which will be, for many years at least, the standard Histories of Greece in the English language; one of them has been completed four years, the other is now about half published; and we are not aware that the least notice has been taken of them by any American periodical. To Mr. Grote's history we are almost positive that there has not been the slightest allusion. We have therefore made bold, in default of abler scholars, to take the matter in hand, deeply regretting that so interesting and important a subject has not attracted the attention of some one better qualified to do it justice.

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## TABLE ÆSTHETICS.

Knickerbocker, March 1848.

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I AM going to write on a most important subject, one which concerns all classes and conditions of men every day of their lives, and has a direct influence on very weighty public and private affairs; which is intimately associated with ideas of joy and comfort and strength; three most pleasant things. It is the art, science and mystery of those acts which the Transcendentalists call 'appropriating to one's self a portion of the outer world;' in plain English, breakfasting and dining with their incidents and accessories; what for want of a better term, I call *table-æsthetics*.

Now I am well aware at the outset, that many very worthy persons, either from defective education and want of opportunity to know better, or from inconsiderate conformity with those about them, (a common American fault,) or from want of accurate discrimination, confounding things which have some resemblance (another very common fault of our beloved countrymen) will consider



my purpose in this essay frivolous at best, if not absolutely mischievous. So, as it is always well to clear the ground for a fair start, our preliminary step will be to hear what they have to say, and then endeavor to enlighten them a little.

'The art of eating and drinking!' cries one. 'Animal propensities! sensual! making a beast of one's self! Digging his grave with his teeth!' and much more in the same strain.

Hold hard, my friend, and do n't talk rubbish. Do you mean to insinuate that table-æstheticism and gluttony are convertible terms? If so, you might just as well say that every man who goes to see the *Venus de Medicis* is a profligate. The very reverse is true in most cases. It is notorious that the most barbarous nations, those among whom table-æsthetics, as well as all other arts, have made the least progress, are the most voracious feeders. The man who eats knowingly, generally eats at least one-fourth less than the average of those who eat at random. He seldom exceeds two meals a day and one of those not a hearty one. For my own part I would wager that if the readers who are tempted to turn up a frugal and virtuous nose at the title of this paper were put upon my daily diet by way of regimen, the majority would cry out for a change, and confess themselves half-starved in less than a fortnight. And on the score of health, worthy Cato, let me tell you that you are sadly mistaken. It is not the man who, after the toil and bustle of the day are over, leisurely refreshes himself with a dainty and judicious repast, irrigated with a moderate supply of the generous *laticæ Lyæus*, and then reposes over his book or in pleasant conversation to digest it; it is not he who is bilious and dyspeptic. No, it is the man who at the unnatural and barbarous hour of one P. M., pitches into himself a variety of miscellaneous provender indiscriminately for fifteen minutes, and in fifteen more is at his business again. As to the intellectual side of the question, there are doubtless extraordinary occasions when a man has to get through a certain amount of head-work in a limited time, and is obliged to live like a hermit in order to keep his brain clear. Most persons have had some such experiences. I remember a period of three weeks during which I would



willingly have dispensed with eating altogether, and did only take just enough to support the system. But this corresponds to the training of the pedestrian or the jockey, by which he is enabled to undergo a preternatural amount of bodily exertion; and the one is no more the normal state and habitual system of diet, than the other is of exercise. All the genial and natural products of a man's intellect, the happiest spontaneous effusions of his fancy and imagination, proceed from a well-nourished frame. *Satur est quum dicit Horatius, Evæ!*

As to the expense too, the argument in many cases makes all the other way. Economy, not a niggardly parsimony, but a sensible and prudent economy, enters into the calculations of the æsthetic. Good taste abhors excessive profusion, and good edibles are naturally less prone to be wasted than bad ones.\* A clever French cook will make up nearly the difference in his wages by saving the fuel which would have been unprofitably expended by an Irish ignoramus, or *ignoramus*, as I once heard a learned Boston lady call it. It is well known by those versed in military affairs, that a French regiment will subsist comfortably on rations which would drive an English regiment to mutiny, not because the French do not require as much nourishment as the English, whatever their novelists and dramatists may represent to the contrary, but because their superior skill in cookery enables them to make a given amount of animal matter go further. Let it be allowed, however, that æsthetic habits do involve more outlay of capital than a rude and hap-hazard way of supporting nature. It remains to be asked whether the advantages procured by them do not justify the additional expense. And this will be better considered in connection with the third objection which may be supposed, viz., that the pursuit is a frivolous one and not worthy the time and trouble which it requires.

Now if man be a social animal (as we have the highest authority for asserting that he is) and if table-æstheticism promotes sociability, then in truth is it no

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\* In the hall of a New-England college where I pretended to eat some twelve years ago, the expense of what was wasted would have kept a decent table. The students used to squander their supplies in very spite, they were so bad.



unimportant matter. A good dinner is the parent of good feeling, peace with one's-self and with the world, benevolence and liberality. Wherefore the charitable societies of England do wisely give dinners, knowing that the purse is more open after a sumptuous banquet. On the other hand, what mortification, discomfort and misanthropy result from a bad dinner! What an awful infliction it is to be asked to partake in suffering one! And to say that any man with the requisite means can provide the needful by merely giving orders to his cook, confectioner and wine-merchant, is absurd; for in the first place, it requires æsthetic discernment to choose *the* cook, *the* confectioner and *the* wine-merchant. Moreover, we have observed that one part of the science is to manage your means and make the most of your resources, so that one instructed can give an agreeable banquet at the expense which would procure but a sorry set-out in the hands of the uninitiated. The truth is that table-æstheticism is a branch of the fine arts, a subordinate one indeed, but occupying its distinct and appropriate place; and you will generally find that the man who has a good taste in poetry, painting and music, will also have a good taste in all things pertaining to the management of the table. There are some people who think all the fine arts wicked, and incentives to bad passions; and others who, having no perception of the beautiful, think them expensive follies, and take credit to themselves for their insensibility, like Mr. Chief-Engineer Jervis, who makes a merit of defacing and disfiguring the most beautiful river in the world. And there are men whose palates are naturally blunt, and to whom it makes not the slightest difference what they taste or imbibe, just as there are others again who would as lief talk to an ugly woman as to a handsome one; but you, reader mine, are not of that sort, I trust, nor happily are the majority of mankind, even in this utilitarian age. Still even these people may be led to see the excellency of table-æstheticism, if they will look at the power it confers on a master of it in society. What gives a man *prestige* and personal popularity, what softens criticism and wins partisans like being an irreproachable Amphitryon? No observant man can doubt that the Boston literati owe a great part of their reputation and influence to the fact



of their understanding table-æsthetics and habitually giving correct little banquets to each other and to casual visitors. I don't think any one who ever dined with SHORTBODY could set himself down seriously to inquire whether the metaphors in DIABOLINE will hold water, and whether Trochaic Tetrameter Acatalectic is a natural and suitable metre in English or not. What weapon so powerful in the hands of a diplomatist as a *comme-il-faut* entertainment? Hence the Russians, whose diplomatic superiority is well known, give their ministers unlimited supplies that they may 'hang out' (pardon the vulgarity of the expression, as Jeames says) without limit. What keeps a political association together like good eating and drinking? There was a striking instance of this some years ago in the English parliament, where thirty radical members voted together in a body so long as two of their number (Molesworth and Leader) supplied the bond of union in the shape of dinners. When the dinners stopped the unanimity stopped also. Were I ever to become a politician (*μη γένοιτο*) I should, as the very first step import a first-rate *artiste* from Paris. A friend who, like Ulysses, had seen the cities and ascertained the dispositions of many men, made a remark the other day in connection with this point, which struck me as proceeding from a philosophic mind. 'Why,' said he, 'do the good people of Boston fret about the way things go on in Washington, and complain of the national politics? What 's the use of slanging the President and passing resolutions? There is a far more natural and efficacious remedy open to them. Let them send down to the capital (by subscription or otherwise) one of their most æsthetic men; let him build an elegant house, give elegant parties, and induct the western and south-western members into the refinements of civilization and especially of cookery. My life for it, they would do more in that way than by all the speeches that ever were made in Faneuil-Hall, even though the god-like Daniel were one of the speakers. And the god-like would say so himself, for he understands the value of table-æsthetics.'

Such was the substance of my friend's remarks, and I commend them to the attention of those whom they most concern, as well worthy to be pondered upon.

There are some things connected with table matters,



such as carving,\* making salad, telling good wine from bad, without the knowledge of which a gentleman's education cannot be said to be complete, and the subject generally I consider an essential part of education; very much more so than dancing, which some people consider the *sine qua non*, for every one does not dance, and it is possible to live very happily without dancing, whereas every one eats and drinks, and few people can live well without eating well; infinitely more so than that stump oratory, the acquisition of which seems to be the great object of half our young men, and which only renders them nuisances in conversation, and makes true oratory at a discount from the number of parodies upon it.

The above reflections, and many more of a like sort, were recently suggested to me with peculiar force by the perusal of a table classic, BRILLAT-SAVARIN'S *Physiologie du Gout*. Although in the twenty-odd years which have elapsed since its publication many improvements have been made in the art of which it treats, it has still a right to be considered one of the standard works on table-æsthetics. Whether it has ever been translated into English or not I will not undertake to say; but if there is a translation in our vernacular, I have never met with it; and at any rate, the book is not very well known among Anglo-Saxons. BRILLAT-SAVARIN was an advocate, and afterward a judge of the *Cour de Cassation*. Proscribed in the Revolution, he took refuge first in Switzerland and then in America. In our good city of Gotham he passed two years, supporting himself as a musician and a teacher, and gaining popularity, as he says himself, by taking care not to appear cleverer (*n'avoir plus d'esprit*,) than the Americans. Condescending Gaul! It is gratifying to find that such self-sacrificing modesty met with its reward. Better days

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\* I MENTION carving particularly, being every day painfully reminded of the defects of my early education in this point. It is a natural consequence of the system practised at most of our colleges of cramming the students into an uncomfortable hall, and feeding them on the coarsest fare, that they should contract a pernicious and not easily eradicated habit of scarifying and mangling dishes without care or decency. On this theme alone a treatise might be written. *Bad fare naturally and inevitably induces a disrespect for the table and a neglect of its proprieties.*



dawned at home; he was restored to his old post of judge, and for the last twenty-five years of his life lived on the fat of the land. His great work, 'The Physiology of Taste, or Transcendental Gastronomy,' of which I shall try to give the benevolent reader some general idea, was first published in 1825, just before his decease. By way of prolegomena to the book we have twenty *fundamental axioms*, some of the most important of which I proceed to transcribe, with such comments as naturally present themselves.

'2. Animals *feed*, man *eats*; it takes a clever man to know to eat.'

Accordingly, we hear the most unæsthetic and unrefined persons calling their dinners, etc., *food*. The word is awfully prevalent in Connecticut. The tutors at Yale used to talk about *food* till they made me sick. And that nuisance of modern English society, the 'fast man,' who is always very much of a Goth in his eating as well as his dress, never says that he is going to a dinner or a supper at so-and-so's, but to a 'feed' at so-and-so's; and certainly the expression is appropriate enough for such donkeys.

'3. The destiny of nations depends on the manner in which they are nourished.'

This is illustrated in the body of the work itself, where the author says: 'In the state of society at which we have now arrived it is difficult to imagine a people living exclusively on bread and vegetables. Such a nation, did it exist, would infallibly be subjugated by carnivorous invaders, as the Hindoos have been successively the prey of whoever has chosen to attack them.' The inferiority in warlike prowess of the abstemious Spaniards and Italians to the more substantially nourished French, Germans and English, is notorious. And the Mexicans — poor mortals! — who live on *frijoles* and *tortillas*, are ridden over rough-shod by our beef and venison-fed soldiery. Apart from mere physical capacity, we can trace many of the mental characteristics of different nations to their different meats, beverages and condiments. The influence of beer and tobacco on the German mind — the stolid acquiescence in the present and dogged conservatism induced by the former, the mistiness of speculation fostered by the latter, are self-evident. The



national light wines and indispensable coffee point to several elements of the French character; and it has often seemed to me that the windy loquacity and speech-making propensities of a certain class of our countrymen are distinctly referable to their large consumption of cold water.

'10. Those who get indigestions [why could we not say, *who indigest themselves?* — a felicitous expression, that *s'indigèrent*,] or get drunk, do not know how to eat or drink.'

*Cf. sis*, (as the classical editors say,) our remarks *ante* on the error of confounding table-æstheticism with gluttony.

'14. A dessert without cheese is like a belle who has lost an eye.'

Various nations employ cheese in very various ways. The Italian takes it in soup, and with the national *minestra* of macaroni or vermicelli it is a great improvement; but with any other kind of soup, detestable. The Frenchman serves it at the other end of his dinner, among the fruit and the bon-bons. The Englishman eats it — often accompanied by salad — between the meats and the pastry; and with a very large number of Englishman it supplies the place of pastry or dessert altogether; cheese being to John Bull what pie is to Brother Jonathan. With us 'crackers and cheese' are the ordinary tavern and steam-boat lunch, and you may also see the travelling public devouring much cheese at *tea*, along with smoked beef, cake and preserves — awful catachresis of eatables! I saw with my own eyes a man do this who was then in the legislature, and has since gone abroad on a diplomatic mission. I hope he will learn better in Europe. On our dinner-tables cheese is seldom seen, the national taste being decidedly in favor of closing with a variety of sweets; and as a general rule, our custom seems preferable; yet there are some occasions when cheese makes the most appropriate termination; for instance, when you drink hock. I said, *when*; for on more accounts than one, hock is not to be drunk every day. At such a time you cannot do better than follow the example of my venerated æsthetic friend 'JOHN WATERS,' and let your *roti* be succeeded by nothing but some delicate Neufchatel with exquisite little dry biscuits and the finest



butter; for sweets destroy German wine, and any sweets except fresh fruit and those indispensable sponge biscuits familiarly denominated finger-cakes, are detrimental to your perception of Bordeaux and Burgundy.

*'17. The indispensable quality of the Cook is punctuality: it should also be that of the guest.'*

I have written this in small-capitals. Every guest and every host should have it by heart. Of the two a deviation from punctuality is worse on the host's part, as being less remediable. If a man doesn't come at the time appointed, you have always the resource of sitting down without him; but what escape is there for the unfortunates who are kept three-quarters of an hour in the drawing-room hungry and listless, making painful endeavors to amuse each other, and looking anxiously round every time the door is opened to see if dinner is announced? The English used to have an absurd custom of understanding the time of dinner as two hours later than that named in the invitation; *e. g.*, if you were asked as six, the company assembled at half-past seven and sat down at eight. They are now wiser, and rarely wait more than fifteen minutes beyond the specified time,\* which indeed is a very liberal allowance; five for difference of watches, five for accidents, such as detention in the road, etc., and five out of pure grace. The Parisians are generally punctual to the minute. With us there is no fixed rule; some hosts are punctual, and some not. The consequence is extreme confusion, for a corresponding uncertainty is produced on the part of the guests; and the results are frequently very awkward. For instance, an invited one assists with extreme punctuality at two or three entertainments in the beginning of a season, and has to wait three-quarters of an hour at each. He becomes tired of the fun, and on the next invitation, should he have any business on hand, says to himself: 'There's no use of hurrying,' and accordingly arrives perhaps half an hour after the period specified; but this time he has to do with a punctual host, and finds to his confusion that the soup and fish are already

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\* Of course there are some exceptions to this rule, as there are to most rules. Thus, if a commoner expected a peer to dine with him, honest JOHN'S inherent flunkeyism would probably make him wait considerably beyond the fifteen minutes.



despatched, or what is worse, that the dinner is waiting *for him*, and the guests staring at him, as at a guilty creature, when he enters. At Washington the old English unpunctuality is the rule; at least it was a very few years ago. You were asked to breakfast at ten, and on arriving found no one up to receive you. It once befell me to be invited to dinner at the 'White-House.' The card of invitation named an early hour — half-past five, I think. For forty minutes I enjoyed an uninterrupted opportunity of examining the furniture and calculating whether the appropriations made for it were extravagant or not. At ten minutes after six a member of the President's family made his appearance; in half an hour more the company began to assemble, and at a quarter past seven we sat down to table. Now this was of no consequence in the case of a nobody like myself, but the very same might have happened, and I have no doubt has happened more than once, to some foreigner of distinction. All delays on either side are bad. Waiting for a guest spoils the dinner; waiting for a dinner may half-starve the guests. It makes an important difference in a man's morning arrangements whether he is to dine at five or at seven, as in the latter case some slight mid-day refreshment is necessary. Note also the next axiom.

17. To wait too long for a late guest is a want of respect for those who are present.'

The lion of the party has a sort of prescriptive right to be waited for, *but it is very bad manners in him to avail himself of the privilege*. Whenever the θεοὶ Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες shall place me in a dinnergiving position, I don't intend to wait for any one, lion or not.

'18. He who receives his friends without giving any personal attention to the repast which is prepared for them, does not deserve to have friends.'

'19. The mistress of the house should always make sure that the coffee is perfect; and the master, that the liqueurs are of the best quality.'

Alas! with us it would often puzzle master and mistress both to make sure of the coffee. It is astonishing that out of so many civilized countries all consuming the beverage to a greater or less extent, there are only two in which you ordinarily and habitually get good coffee;



France, to wit, and Belgium. The French seem to have a peculiar genius for the preparation of this article. Our author's receipt is: 'Pour boiling water upon coffee placed in a silver or china vase perforated with very small holes. Take this first decoction, warm it up to boiling point, strain it again, and you have as clear and good coffee as can be made.' I used to dispense with the perforated vessel, and consequently with the first straining; instead of which I followed the ordinary plan of mixing an egg with the ground coffee. My instructors in the art were an Englishman and an American, who in this way made as good coffee as I ever drank in Paris; but I never could come up to their mark, except on a few lucky days, though I made coffee for myself nearly a year; which confirms me in the belief that the art is born with one. But while thus frankly owning my deficiencies, I believe myself capable of giving some not altogether useless hints on the subject. The first great and general fault in English and American coffee-making is, *not putting in enough coffee*. At hotels universally, and at private houses generally, there is one-half or two-thirds too much water. The next great and common error is *over-roasting the berry*, which imparts a bitter and nauseous flavor. By carefully avoiding these dangers, you may make very palatable coffee without its being quite clear, though of course complete clarity is essential to its perfection. The coffee should be *roasted and ground just before it is used*. This is one great secret of the superiority of the Parisian article. If it be too much trouble to prepare the coffee every day, the best way of keeping it is *after it is made*. You may bottle up enough for a week, (taking care to cork it tight,) and warm it over as you want it. This sounds strange, but I have tried the experiment with entire success.

The remark upon liqueurs is worthy of attention. Not long ago I was at a dinner where the host had imprudently left the care of this matter to the butler; and the consequence was, that instead of Maraschino and Curaçoa, we were presented with — anisette and cherry-bounce! Not that cherry-bounce is by any means a despicable vanity, under certain circumstances, but it is not *exactly* what you would select for a *chasse-café*.

The English are very ignorant of the use and theory



of coffee and liqueurs. You will see an Englishman take two large cups of coffee, flooded with milk, and should a *chasse* be introduced — which is not generally the case — he will make no scruple of tossing off two or even three glasses. Just before leaving the fast-anchored isle, I concentrated my æsthetic resources into three dinners: conceive my dismay, when after the second I perceived one of the guests — a young Eton-bred Cantab, but quite old enough to have known better — seizing my last bottle of Maraschino and drinking it as if it were tableclaret! Fortunately I had presence of mind enough to divert his attention by throwing some champagne in his way.

The earlier part of M. Brillat-Savarin's first volume treats chiefly of matters physiological and anatomical, which in a treatise not professedly scientific may as well be passed over. The third of his chapters, or 'meditations,' as he calls them, comes directly to *gastronomy*, which is defined as 'the scientific knowledge of all that relates to man in the matter of nourishment: its subject-matter is all that can be eaten: its end the preservation of the species by the best possible sustenance.' He then shows the connection of gastronomy with other sciences, natural history, physics, chemistry, political economy, etc., and particularly its influence in promoting the intercourse of different nations. A feast knowingly set out is like an epitome of the world, where each quarter has its representatives. Gastronomic knowledge is of great utility to all classes, but especially to those in easy circumstances, and who are forced by their position to give frequent entertainments. To take the lowest view of the case, it saves them from being pilfered at will by their dependants. In illustration of this he introduces, as his way is, an appropriate anecdote.

'The Prince de Soubise meant to give a fête one day. It was to close with a supper, the bill-of-fare of which he demanded to see. The maître-d'hôtel appeared at his bed-side with a beautiful bill, headed by a vignette, and the first article which the prince cast eyes on was 'Fifty hams.' 'Eh? what, Bertrand!' he exclaimed, 'are you mad? or do you mean to treat my whole regiment?' 'No, my lord; there will only appear one on the table, but the remainder is no less necessary, for my *espagnole*,



my *blonds*, my *garnitures*, my —' 'Bertrand, you are cheating me, and this item shall not be allowed!' 'Ah! my lord!' said the *artiste*, keeping his temper with difficulty, 'you do n't know our resources! Only say the word, and these fifty hams, which trouble you so, shall all go into a glass vial no larger than my thumb.' What answer could be made to so positive an assertion? The Prince smiled and submitted; the item was allowed.'

Next come some remarks on the appetite, and the danger of disobeying its calls. To illustrate this, there is a most awful story, which I cannot detail in cold blood. That any man, however high a public functionary he might be, should leave his company *four hours and a half* in the agonies of hunger and expectation while he was at a cabinet council, seems a pitch of depravity incredible even in a Frenchman; and that the company should have waited out the infliction without pillaging his house, or setting fire to it, or even adopting the extremely lenient course of walking off and dining elsewhere, seems an equally præter-Gallic observance of those *convenances* which form the French moral code. Afterward we have some anecdotes of great appetites, derived from the author's personal observation; among others one of a curé, who used to consume in his mid-day meal a capon and a leg of mutton, not to mention the trifling accessories of soup, salad and cheese. It must be remembered, however, that the French *gigots* are decidedly diminutive, and not to be named in comparison with the legs which English clowns eat for wagers.

The next 'meditation' is on the respective nourishment and other different effects of different kinds of aliment. One remark is curious. That an ichthyophagous population is blessed with abundance of infants is generally known; but it is not so generally known that the female infants preponderate in the proportion of nearly ten to one. Savarin's inference is that a fish diet is debilitating. That it produces leanness there is little doubt. 'Jockeys, in *wasting*, are never allowed pudding when fish is to be had,' says an English authority; a Quarterly Reviewer, if I am not mistaken.

We have now arrived at particular dishes; first, of course, soup, about which we have somewhat to say by-and-by. Then the *bouilli*, that ghost of meat, which



French economy has made a national dish. Our author sees that it is a great mistake, and observes with pleasure that it has been banished from the best-conducted tables, and replaced by fish. This was in 1825. At present there is little danger of encountering *bouilli* at a Parisian dinner. The national introduction of fish being *just before the roast* instead of just after the soup, a complete French dinner now involves *two* courses of fish at these two different periods. To us Anglo-Saxons, fish after soup seems a natural sequence; but it is difficult to give any *a priori* reason for it, and it may be only the force of habit. On another point we have less hesitation in condemning the French: their acceptance of cold fish; which in any shape is an abomination.\* Indeed, considering the French gastronomic skill, it is singular that they admit into their catalogue of edibles three of the most insipid viands: *bouilli*, cold fish, and veal. The last may be tolerated on account of the badness of their beef. Good beef is only to be obtained in the very first cafés of Paris. Even at private houses in the metropolis it is generally detestably tough. As to their mutton, it is worse than ours; which is saying a great deal. Indeed, the sheep is only to be found in its perfection in the British isles; while, in spite of all that is said about 'the roast-beef of Old England,' you will get *on an average* of hotels and private houses, better beef in our Middle States than in Queen Victoria's dominions. But I am running miles ahead of my subject.

The observations on game I do not intend to remark upon or quote from, being fully persuaded that we are the only people in the world who know how to cook game. The English keep it too long and the French do it too much; added to which, the French game is not so good as ours, to begin with. Our blacks especially have a natural talent for the preparation of this delicious nutriment. And being deeply sensible of our many æsthetical deficiencies, I take an honest pride in being able to insist on this superiority, which I have too often seen, heard and tasted the verification of, to be in any doubt about it. Never did I meet foreigner so prejudiced as to resist the argument of a canvass-back.

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\* Of course there is no reference here to anchovy in Mayonnaise, which is a *condiment*, not a *basis*.



Our author alludes to the practice of beginning a dinner with oysters as an ancient custom, which had become disused in his time. It has since been revived, and deserves all encouragement, as the very best way of preparing for your repast, however delicate a soup you may have in prospect; *only don't eat two dozen*, or even one dozen. Three oysters of the size we have them, or six like the European ones, give the proper whet. To this rule of course there are individual exceptions. One of BRILLAT-SAVARIN'S friends used to eat *thirty-two-dozen*, ('say three hundred and eighty four,') and then was just ready for dinner.

The speculations on the truffle are amusing. Savarin suspects that the reputation of this famous edible is owing partly to its rarity and partly to what he learnedly denominates its *genesiac* powers. But give whatever weight you may to the fact of its being an exotic and an erotic, it must be confessed to impart an exquisite flavor to those dishes into the composition of which it enters, though nothing very wonderful in itself. With all due deference to the great authorities, and the general opinion the other way, I do *not* think that the dried and bottled truffles are *very* inferior to those freshly dug. I have eaten the latter at Rome, where they are as common as potatoes, and could not not detect any great difference. Talking of truffles reminds one of mushrooms, which are to us almost as great a rarity as truffles. Herein we are much to blame for not properly cultivating our national resources. A very short residence in England or France will convince any one of the importance of this fungus in cookery, and — it may be unfashionable, reader, but I never attempt to disguise my opinions — the cook who has plenty of good mushrooms at command need not, *me judice*, much regret the absence of truffles.

Of coffee I have discoursed already. Chocolate finds great favor with our author, who perhaps, amid his well-merited eulogiums, slurs over rather too much the fact that with some people it promotes biliousness. The Spanish preventive against this is to follow the chocolate with a glass of water. On this account the beverage is not so well adapted to our summers; but in winter there is no better breakfast than a copious cup of chocolate with a roll or some dry toast. It is very nourishing,



and very light at the same time. Whether a man is going to exercise his head or his legs, whether he means to read, write or walk, or particularly if he is going to travel, there is nothing like the chocolate.

Passing over some more 'meditations' upon 'sugar,' 'the theory of frying' and other matters. (for one is obliged to omit something,) we come to the important subject of *thirst*, which naturally leads to the means of appeasing it. Now, having said some things already which may appear rather impudent, I am going to say one which certainly will appear so. I believe M. Brillat-Savarin to have been rather a take-in in the matter of drinks. I do this, not because he holds forth on the virtues of *eau sucrée*, as a beverage 'refreshing, wholesome, agreeable, and sometimes salutary as a remedy;' for the French passion for that most insipid of beverages which turns the stomach of an Anglo-Saxon, is an inexplicable idiosyncrasy, which must be put into the same category with their delight in veal. No, my reasons are first that he says comparatively little on the whole subject; and second, that he promulgates this as one of his fundamental axioms.

'It is a heresy to pretend that one must not change wines: the tongue becomes saturated, and after the third glass the best wine excites only an obtuse sensation.'

As if one could not drink four consecutive glasses of Latour without wanting to cross it with some other wine! The very reverse of BRILLAT-SAVARIN'S assertion holds good. It is the mixing of liquors, and crossing them back and forward, that satiates and confuses the palate, and *moreover it is the surest and quickest way of getting drunk*; an important consideration. Stick to one wine during each course. The only *wine of intervals*, if I may be allowed the expression, is champagne.

The most sagacious remarks I ever met with on the use of champagne are to be found in Walker's Original. Walker was an eccentric character, but he had some very correct ideas on the subject of dinner-givings. By the way, did you ever know a Walker who was not an original in some way or other? I never did. The eccentricities of the celebrated HOOKHAM, (familiarly called HOOKY, and related to the distinguished Chinese philosopher HOW QUA,) are too well known to need more.



than an allusion. And this reminds me of a story (I don't know where I shall get to with all these digressions) relative to the said HOOKHAM WALKER. It was once my good fortune to dine with six jolly Englishmen, among whom was Romano.\* Over the mahogany, an exciting discussion came off between the Rum'un and another of the company suspected of being a Mason. The conversation became animated, and at last my friend was tempted to terminate a period by the emphatic and sweeping assertion that 'Masonry was all Walker!'

Now our eighth man was a quiet middle-aged parson, not altogether at home in his position, for the rest of us thought and talked rather too fast (in the natural as well as the slang sense of the term) for him, and he did not always perfectly understand the subject on the *tapis*. Just after Romano had uttered his oracular condemnation, there was a momentary pause, when our clerical friend, bending forward, observed in a slightly hesitating tone, 'I understand you then to say that this author, WALKER, whom you quote, considers Masonry to be a delusion?'

'Just so,' responded the Rum'un, sustaining his gravity by a mighty effort, while the remainder of us stuffed our napkins into our respective mouths in very imperfectly suppressed laughter.

Well, Walker says of champagne, that to go round with it only once or twice (as is often the case in English and French dinners and sometimes even in American dinners,) is tantalizing and mere aggravation. It should go round once during each course, that is to say, three, four, or five times according to the length of the dinner, *making its appearance with the fish*, and not (a very common fault) in the middle of the dinner.\*\* And thus judiciously employed, it has a marvellous effect in enlivening and spiriting up a party. With us generally the fault is the other way, and our Amphitryons 'lay on' the beverage too freely, which is also, though not equally, a mistake, for the best champagne when drunk pure, cloy

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\* For a full account of this gentleman, see the *American Review*, vol. v., p. 681.

\*\* We suppose that the goblets are of a proper capacity. Some of the old-fashioned tapering glasses scarcely hold a thimble full.



upon the palate sooner than any other wine. Dry is less cloying than sweet, and accordingly all *savans* prefer it. With champagne diluted with iced water in the proportion of one-half or two-thirds as a summer beverage, the case is different. It is the most cooling and refreshing of drinks, and there is no satiety or head-ache in an ocean of it. Therefore, reader mine, when you give a dinner in hot weather put a bottle of champagne (or at least a pint bottle) and a saucer of ice by every gentleman.\* Never mind the looks: it removes all fear of deficient supply, and saves John and Thomas a vast deal of trouble in running round with the wine.

On the intellectual effect of champagne drunk continuously, BRILLAT-SAVARIN remarks, that 'this wine which is exciting in its first results (*ab initio*) is stupifying in its after results (*in recessu*.) This conclusion he founds partly on theory, arguing from the presence of carbonic acid gas, and partly on his observation of particular cases. For which reason as well as for that above-mentioned, it should never be continued into the desert.

In the preparation of cold drinks we Americans excel. I had the honor of first introducing sherry cobbler, if not into England, at least to 'Young England' in the universities, and the beverage created a perfect *furor*. In hot compounds, the English have the advantage of us. Egg-sherry is better than egg-nogg, and bishop and cardinal (*alias* mulled port and mulled claret) are perfect in their way. The French have adopted punch with great zest. Our author speaks of it in the highest terms, always with the accompaniment of — what do you think? — *toast*, literally *buttered toast*, another English importation which the Parisians were then beginning to relish. Talking of punch, let me give you a hint; the best cold punch is *kirsch* — no liquor but kirsch. You can get it to perfection at Delmonico's. *In that punch there is no to-morrow*; a most important consideration.

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\* It is taken for granted that every man has his *carafe* of water. How ridiculous that at large dinners bread and water, the two first necessities of life, should often be the hardest things to get! Your servants should be instructed to put *two* pieces of bread into each napkin, and carafes of water to each guest are indispensable to a well-regulated dinner of any size.



If John Waters sees this he will never forgive me for insinuating that there is any punch in the world but his; but the truth must be told at all risks, in a matter of such importance.

Under the head of *gastronomic tests*, some bills of fare are presented to us which will not be without interest to the æsthetic reader. Here they are:

'I. *Moderate circumstances; say, five thousand francs income:*

- '1. A fillet of veal *piquée* and cooked in its own gravy.
- '2. A turkey stuffed with chestnuts.
- '3. Fat pigeons properly larded.
- '4. A dish of sour-cROUT and sausages. [?]
- '5. *Œufs à la neige*.

II. *Easy circumstances; say fifteen thousand francs income:*

- '1. A fillet of beef *piqué*, and cooked in its own gravy.
- '2. A fore-quarter of roebuck with cucumber sauce.
- '3. A leg of mutton *à la provençale*.
- '4. A truffled turkey.
- '5. New peas.

'III. *Wealth; say thirty thousand francs income or more:*

- '1. A dish of poultry, seven pounds weight, stuffed with perigord truffles till it becomes a globe.
- '2. An enormous *paté de foie gras*.
- '3. A great carp *à la chambord*.
- '4. Quails truffled and basted with marrow, upon toast with basil.
- '5. A pike *piqué*, and *farci*, with cray-fish sauce.
- '6. A pheasant, kept just long enough, *piqué* on toast
- '7. A hundred sticks of the largest asparagus with gravy sauce.
- '8. Two dozens ortolans *à la provençale*.
- '9. A pyramid of meringues *à la vanille*, and *à la rose*.'

These bills of fare suggest at once several reflections. The first which naturally presents itself to the financial mind of an American is the difference between Gallic and Anglo-Saxon ideas of wealth. Would any man in England or America, with six thousand dollars or twelve hundred pounds a year, think of giving such dinners as that last? I shouldn't like to try it, even as a bachelor. The next is the absence of all mention of soup. Can it be possible that all the delightful varieties of this article have been invented within twenty-two years? It must be so, for it would be absurd to suppose that if they had existed, a professor of the art like M. Brillat-Savarin, would have said nothing about them. The *bisque d'ecrissime*, for instance, which makes the taster of it for



the first time experience a new and unimagined sensation, is one of the last things that an æsthetic writer would pass over. But the matter is put beyond doubt by a preceding chapter, wherein he speaks of *potage* as a single and simple article, and no more thinks of dividing and classifying *potages*, than one would now of discoursing on different kinds of bread; though even on that subject a not un instructive chapter might be written, without going into as much detail as Athenæus has done.\*

The English are not *au fait* at the theory of soup. Not but that some of their soups, such as hare and turtle, are very delicious; but they are soups to make a dinner off, not to begin a dinner with. After consuming a copious plateful of either, you should not attempt to partake of any thing except a little game. To be sure the English don't follow the rule, but after *two* supplies of rich and satisfying turtle, will go on through three or four courses; but the English are certainly gross diners. Bearing in mind this peculiarity of their *potages*, it is often a good plan when among them to eschew soup entirely; for it is possible to make a very good dinner without soup, (though I have a friend who when he reads this won't believe it.) Such a one is even now present to my imagination. I enjoyed it with a comrade at Windsor, just three years ago. It consisted of only three dishes, mutton cutlets with tomato sauce, chicken curry and apple fritters. The cutlets came up on plate, piping hot, the fritters ditto, the curry was dexterously prepared, the ale (so grateful after curry) of the best: to make our banquet perfect we only wanted good wine, but that is not to be had at an English hotel 'for love or money.'

It is astonishing how badly off the English are for wine, considering the great quantity they drink and the high price they pay for it. They literally do not know what Madeira is. I lived among them six years, and in that time knew one corporation and two individuals who had the article as it should be. They boast of their sherry; but how often does an American find what he

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\* Since the above was written, I have ascertained on more minute inquiry that the *Trois Frères Provencaux*, then boasted *twelve* varieties of soup. I has now — how many? probably seventy at least. Such is the progress of science.



would call a good glass of sherry in England? Observe, I am not speaking of hotels merely, but of private families. They principally pride themselves upon their port, which is really no wine at all, but an artificial preparation, which ought only to be used in mixtures, such as bishop and negus, and then with discretion. But it is time to go back to our author and his *cartes*. \*

It will also be observed that in the third bill the epithets prefixed to the dishes signify a *profusion* of good cheer. Indeed, that there shall be no mistake on the subject, he subjoins an observation:

‘For a gastronomic test to produce its effect with certainty, it must be comparatively in large quantity. Experience, founded on knowledge of the human heart, teaches us that the most delicate rarity loses its influence when not in exuberant proportion; for the first impression which it makes upon the guests is naturally checked by the fear that they may be shabbily helped, or in certain cases be obliged to refuse out of politeness.’

Now it seems to me that in this, as well as in every thing, there is a limit. Profusion will no doubt often produce a startling effect, but it is generally at the expense of good taste. I for one do not like to be set down with seven more to a dinner for twenty. Moreover, small dishes, except at a *very* large party, (which is always a mistake,) look more æsthetic and manageable than large ones. It is very easy for any man with ordinary judgment to hit the proper medium; (of course we are speaking of dinners and regular meals; at stand-up collations, ball-suppers, and the like, there must be a great deal of waste, and a great allowance for waste; but the fault is on the right side, and one may be well forgiven for running into it who has witnessed the meanness with which game is often distributed at very pretentious dinners. Titmarsh’s sketch of three people, with one quail among them, is hardly a caricature of what often occurs. Speaking of game, Walker has a truly original idea about its introduction. He says, that by being brought on late in the dinner after the guests’

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\* He does not speak of them as *bills of fare*, but as *series of gastronomic tests*; so that we must suppose them to include only the striking and principal dishes; which will account for the omission of *entrées*, dessert, etc.



appetites are nearly sated, it loses its rank as a delicacy and becomes only equal to an ordinary dish in the beginning of the dinner; therefore he advises that the game should make its appearance *first*; and if there is not game enough for an entire dinner,\* joints afterward. The suggestion is a bold one. Meat after game would strike most people as a startling *ὕστερον πρότερον*; and beside, as it is not right to be *too* hungry when attacking a dainty it appears more reasonable to stay the first edge of appetite on something more substantial; that is, supposing the diner to be sharp-set at the beginning, which he ought to be. The best plan is now and then to give a *game-dinner exclusively*, introducing your venison immediately after the soup, then your small birds of various species, and a great display of ducks to conclude. Dinners of this kind, all in one vein, are very effectual for a change. The fish dinners of Greenwich and Blackwall have a great reputation; very unduly, in my opinion. Water-zouchy is most unsatisfactory stuff; you don't know whether it is fish or soup, hot or cold; whether you are to eat it with a spoon or a fork. Of eels they understand so little as actually to serve them plain fried, without any kind of sauce; and the much vaunted white-bait is not superior to, indeed hardly equal to smelt. Of the eight or ten dishes usually comprised in the first course, the only one worth remembering is the salmon-cutlets, which are really excellent; and the best part of the whole affair is the cooling and agreeable 'cup,' composed, I conjecture, chiefly of sherry and cider, pleasantly flavored with various herbs, and iced to the point. By way of contrast to a comparison with our French *ménus*, let us look at one of Walker's for a bachelor party of eight:

- '1. Turtle-soup and punch.
- '2. White-bait, brown-bread and butter, and champagne.
- '3. Grouse and claret.
- '4. Apple-fritters and jelly; claret continued.
- '5. Icee and fruit; claret continued indefinitely.'

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\* Walker was evidently from his writings a moderate and judicious eater. Thus he speaks of having dined one Christmas on a woodcock and a slice of plum-pudding; a *ménus* which almost frightened the 'Quarterly Review' into fits.



The 'Quarterly Review' objected to the turtle, not without reason. The sweet punch which the English always drink with turtlesoup is terribly out of place; and so is, between you and me, reader, the Roman-punch introduced at our dinners before the game; at least if you intend to eat any game after it. It may do for the women, who are not always able to appreciate venison and canvassbacks.

To come back to BRILLAT-SAVARIN'S observation, which has set us wandering so far. The last clause of it brings to mind a very correct hint, which the considerate reader will not despise because it is quoted (from memory) out of a book of etiquette; for however snobbish it may be generally to refer to such manuals, it does occasionally happen that they are written by gentlemen, and you may sometimes find in them judicious and appropriate observations.

'There is no error more common among half-bred people than that of refusing to take the last piece upon a dish, 'out of manners,' as it is called. This is a direct insult to your host, as it insinuates that he is not able to furnish a fresh supply when the first is exhausted. It is better even to go out of the way for the sake of taking the last piece.'

To which it may be added, that if the host is such a curmudgeon as not to have made sufficient provision, his meanness ought to be exposed in the most unmistakable way. *Item*, if a very small pie or pudding, or any dish which is expected to 'go all round,' be put before you to help, don't worry yourself with trying how many infinitesimal divisions you can make of it, but distribute it in reasonable portions so long as it will hold out, and let the rest go without. It is the host's fault, not yours. I once saw this experiment tried with complete success. Half the guests were pieless that day, but the master of the house always took care in future to have his tarts of a proper size.

Some men, according to our author, are gourmands by nature, others by position. Of the latter in France he enumerates four classes: financiers, doctors, literary men, and *dévôts*, or what we should call 'Professors of Religion.' Such a catalogue would hardly answer for our meridian, or even just across the channel. It appears



that the different orders of French nuns are distinguished for different kinds of confectionary. English parsons are not altogether without the reputation of understanding the things which pertain to good eating and drinking. The Fellows of Cambridge are right hearty livers, clever in the dishes they have, and most liberal and Catholic in their acceptance of new ones. I well remember how, after the fatigues of one examination, worn out and half delirious, (not having slept and scarcely having eaten for five days and nights,) I went to the rooms of a fellow-classic to take a quiet cup of tea and read poetry to him. This double process had pretty well soothed me down, and I was on the point of departing at nine P. M., or thereabout, when Horace called me back.

Won't you stay and read some more TENNYSON, Benson, and have something to drink? I have some capital cognac that was sent me *by an old parson in the country.*

At these last words I re-seated myself in well-founded confidence. Better cognac never came out of France. The morning was considerably advanced when I fell asleep in his arm-chair, gloriously oblivious of my recent annoyances.

We have already adverted to the influence of gastronomy and table-aesthetics upon the destiny of nations. M. BRILLAT-SAVARIN returns to this head, and illustrates it by a striking example from the history of his own country.

After 1815, the conquered and humbled French were obliged to pay more than *fifteen hundred millions of francs* in three years. Men naturally feared that this enormous drain on the finances would ruin the country; but the very reverse proved true. During those three years, *more money came into France than went out of it.* The secret of this lay in the excellence of the Parisian cookery, which attracted thousands of strangers and kept them there. One individual instance of temporary loss and ultimate profit is positively gigantic. When the invading army passed through Champagne, they helped themselves to *six hundred thousand* bottles of M. Moët's wine. In the ten years succeeding, the additional orders which he received from the north of Europe more than repaid him for this enormous pillage.

We now come to a most important topic; not that



M. SAVARIN'S remarks upon it are very copious or striking, for he was writing for a people who had some knowledge and consideration in the matter; but an infinitely important topic for us Americans, who in relation to it show more 'crass' ignorance, as Lord Brougham calls it, or wilful and sinful carelessness, than any people professing to be civilized. An American seems to think he is losing time by taking his dinner at a decent pace and preserving a decent composure and tranquillity after it. Accordingly, one man rushes to his counting-house before the last morsel is fairly down; another chooses that time of day of all others to take a walk — such a walk, too! — as if his dinner was before instead of in him, and he were walking for it; a third chooses the half-hour preceding his departure on a journey for the important meal, and after shovelling in his last piece of pie, runs off to catch the boat; a fourth jumps into a skeleton buggy and tears over the Third-Avenue, his fast-trotter pulling his arms half off. If you are asked to make up a riding-party, ten to one the time specified is 'after dinner.' Suppose you are in the country, at a friend's house. How many of my readers can realize the truth of a picture like this? You sit down to table at the early hour of three; not too early, however, for you have risen with whatever American bird corresponds to the sky-lark, and breakfasted with the chickens. Well, at four, instead of enjoying a leisurely cup of coffee and a cigar — if so inclined — on the piazza, and admiring the scenery in luxurious and dreamy repose, some fidgetty character proposes to 'see the grounds,' and forthwith you are dragged off two or three miles, up hill and down, part of the way under a broiling sun, and by way of finish, are put into a very imperfectly-cleaned and still more imperfectly-bailed boat, and set to work at rowing — of all exercises the most laborious to a man not perfectly accustomed to it — for an hour or more; or, as I said before, you are called on to mount and ride. (N. B. — A ride does *not* mean a drive, which latter diversion, if you have a Christian horse, and not one trained on 'b'hoy' principles, is a very legitimate and wholesome occupation after dinner in warm weather.) Now until our countrymen and countrywomen reform these things; until the great truth can be inculcated upon



them that *after a copious meal, abstinence from any thing approaching to severe bodily or mental exercise is indispensable for at least one hour*; until then, I say, all the tee-totallers and Grahamites that ever prated will not save them from bile and dyspepsia. Not but that bad liquor, pickles, hot buttered cakes, salt meats, and other things either atrocious in themselves or mischievous in their excess, do undoubtedly cause a great deal of harm; but the prime evil of all is, that whatever they eat they do not take time to digest it.

The English are as gross and nearly as indiscriminating feeders as we; but they understand perfectly this matter of digestion. The hardest reading student at the university, the most plodding barrister at the inn of court, the shrewdest and most diligent merchant, all eschew on principle hard work of any sort for the hour or two succeeding their prandiation; and this praiseworthy custom may divide with their regular and systematic exercise the merit of that magnificent health and strength which characterize all the upper and middle classes of England.

These remarks upon the post-prandial period naturally bring up another great question, to which, reader mine, I do entreat your attention. We used to practice the good old English custom of 'seeing mahogany;' that is, in twenty minutes or half an hour after dessert is placed on the table, the ladies retire and the gentlemen remain at table for about an hour longer. But it is with sincere grief and mortification that I am compelled to observe and confess that within a few years this ancient usage has been invaded and nearly displaced by the continental custom, according to which both ladies and gentlemen rise very soon after the dessert has appeared; before in fact the more deliberate part of the guests have done justice to it or begun to appreciate the Bordeaux. Now I maintain that for the real purpose and object of a dinner-party — which is not to make a great display of plate and china, and bully your guests under the pretence of hospitality, nor to 'kill off' people who have invited you before in conformity with the usages of a heartless and hollow etiquette, but *to bring people together that they may enjoy themselves*; and accordingly BRILLAT-SAVARIN nobly and philosophically declares,



that 'to invite any one to dinner is to take charge of his happiness for the time that he remains under your roof' — for the real purpose and object of a dinner-party, I say, the English usage is *on all accounts* preferable. It is not always possible nor desirable that all your guests should be intimate associates to begin with; one great use of a dinner is to make pleasant and clever people acquainted with each other, and give them the opportunity of becoming friends if they mutually suit. Now this opportunity is much better promoted by the English plan, because, FIRST, there are certain subjects on which gentlemen are most disposed to talk out, and draw one another out, and converse easily and naturally, which are mere bores to the ladies. Such are, first, politics; secondly, some particular branches of science and literature which are *generally* out of a lady's line; third, different kinds of business and commercial affairs. In like manner, the women have their peculiar topics; for instance, nice points of dress and millinery, about which few gentlemen take much interest or have much knowledge. So that nothing throws your company together and makes them talk out and lets them within each other, so to speak, like separating the sexes for a time and letting each converse on its own topics.

SECONDLY. A man is naturally inclined immediately after dining to some little *abandon* of attitude and manner. He likes to lean back in his chair or to turn it half round to his neighbor's, or perhaps, if he has well dined, to let out a button or two of his waistcoat. Nor do I believe that some corresponding latitude is altogether unpleasing to the fair sex, and that they object to reclining in their *fauteuils* for a while and gossiping at leisure among themselves without the trouble of having to try to look interested at fine gentlemen speeches. Then there are men who like to smoke after dinner; and though not an habitual smoker myself, I know enough of the effects of the cigar to sympathize with those who find it an exceeding comfort about that time. There are some also who like their half-bottle of Bordeaux after dinner, and others (like myself) who like to sip their glass or two very leisurely. Now by letting a man do these things (which he can do only when the English plan is adopted) you make him feel at home at once:



he grows genial and natural, and disposed to talk other things beside mere drawing-room common-place, and lets you see something of what manner of man he is. Thus you may find out more about a person, his *specialités*, strong and weak points, good qualities, hobbies, etc., by dining once with him, English fashion, than fifty times French fashion, in which latter case, indeed, unless you sit near him you may never come to know him at all.

Nevertheless, in spite of these potent and unanswerable reasons to the contrary, the non-mahogany system is fast gaining ground among us, being urged and supported by two classes, the Gallomaniac fashionables who *will* follow the French blindly in every thing (though even the French are not so abrupt as their imitators here, and do not rush away from the table in ten minutes after the fruit and ices are put on) and the stingy fine people who are shy of their wine. I dined once with a character of the latter sort, and it was amusing (or rather it would have been to any but a sufferer) to watch how carefully he abstained from taking any notice of the decanters before him (of course through mere absence) and how spirited his conversation became with those immediately on each side of him. Having a presentiment that there was but a quarter of an hour before us, I vainly strove to catch his eye with looks that almost magnetized the decanters themselves and brought them down of their own accord. It was only throwing away so much ocular indignation and entreaty. At length when he had nicely calculated his time, he started the wine with a great flourish and it had just gone once round when *Mesdames* rose; the host started with his lady, and we as is in duty bound did the same. Now if a man only drinks one glass of wine at his dessert he likes not to have to do it in a hurry. But the truth is that most diners-out like more, if they will act in truth, and not play hypocrites to themselves and one another. And without any fear of falling into the former English habits of vinous excess (which honest John has now happily amended) a guest may well and comfortably, during the hour of social relaxation, when the chairs of the well-dined banqueters are drawn close together, imbibe his half-bottle of red wine, preceded and followed by a glass of Madeira or Sherry. (This is a very good



rule, a glass of white wine as a foundation for the claret, and another as a preparation for the coffee: it was one of BRUMMELL'S.) There is surely nothing indelicate, or ungallant or discourteous in a man's drinking more than a woman, any more than there is in his eating more, which every one takes as a matter of course. Indeed the latter fact necessarily leads to the former.

And now, should the reader be afflicted with the too prevalent epidemic of Anglophobia, he may begin to chafe, so it will be well to appease him with some of our Frenchman's maxims for a dinner, which however I shall take the liberty of accompanying, as in a former instance, with such commentaries as they suggest. BRILLATSAVARIN introduces them with the appropriate observation that 'however delicate the meats and however sumptuous the accessories, there is no enjoyment at table, should the wine be bad, the guests collected indiscriminately, and the meal consumed with precipitation.'

'The number of guests should not exceed twelve, so that the conversation may be general.'

*Connu et agréé.* I will not positively affirm that it is *impossible* to conduct a large dinner on æsthetic principles, as I have never dined with very great people, and am not prepared to say what the union of colossal fortune and highly cultivated taste may not accomplish; but I am sure it must be very difficult. One reason immediately suggests itself. At a very large table there must be a considerable interval between each course, and supposing that the guests are so felicitously grouped as to be able to amuse themselves during these intervals, with or without the assistance of music, (and this is not probable where the guests are numerous,) the whole period of the dinner must ultimately be protracted to a tedious length. For a bachelor dinner, eight is an excellent number. By the way, when the head of a family gives a bachelor party, he should either pitch his tent at a restaurateur's for the occasion, or contrive that *Madame* shall dine with her relations. One woman among seven men is awfully out of place, and sure to be bored herself without adding any thing to their pleasure.

'The guests should be so selected that their pursuits shall be various, while their tastes are analogous, and



with such points of contact that you will not be obliged to have recourse to the odious formality of introductions.'

A magnificent expression of profound wisdom. 'The guests should be so selected that their pursuits shall be various while their tastes are analogous;' that is to say, they must be gentlemen and liberally-educated men in the highest sense of those terms; and then, however diverging their lines of business or pleasure, they will be sure to find points of contact. 'The odious formality of introductions' is a strong phrase, but not too strong for the occasion. *We* have carried this absurdity to its height. I don't know whether the elaborate presentation and solemn hand-shaking that one has to undergo every where is more annoying or ridiculous. How much better they manage these things in England! There you meet a stranger at dinner; over the wine you hear him talk and perhaps talk to him; you learn his name indirectly and he yours; you take a survey of the man, physically, intellectually, and socially; and afterward it is at your option to know him or not when you next meet. Which ever you do he has no right to be offended.

'The dining-room should be brilliantly lighted, the table-furniture of remarkable propriety, and the temperature between sixty and seventy degrees.'

The first hint needs no comment. The second may for a moment 'give us pause.' There are many things connected with the equipment of the table, involving more or less expense. It is not every one who is the fortunate possessor of costly plate and sumptuous china. The most accessible luxury, and that which gives most pleasure in proportion, is elegant cut glass. The delicate form of a decanter and still more of a glass, adds a new zest to the generous liquor contained in it, and makes the æsthetic drinker linger goblet in hand. But the plate and china are very glorious things for those that have them. Only it is a fatal mistake (happily more common in Europe than here) to suppose that any display of these can atone for any deficiency in that which is upon them. On the contrary, the more exquisite your china and plate the more necessity that your cook should be irreproachable. Any thing bad, or shabby, or scanty in the dinner, is only aggravated by the gorgeousness of the service, which is then felt to be but a



bitter mockery. The temperature of the room will depend not merely not on the quantity of fuel employed, but also on the number of guests in proportion to its size. I mention this apparently self-evident fact, because many people who give dinners do most certainly lose sight of it. Not unconnected with this is another fault which deserves the most serious animadversion; that of putting more people at a table than providence and the cabinet-maker intended should sit at it.\* Doctor X., the master of — College, Cambridge, was a sad sinner in this respect. I used to think that his parties were given on the principle of solving some problem in physics like this: *Given a table of a certain size; required the number of individuals that can be brought around it in a sedentary posture.* It was once my felicity to give him a gentle hint. Being in the position of a trussed goose at his board, in some crippled movement, I contrived to knock over a tumbler. Whereupon he looked thunder-cloudish, and the uncivilized Cantabs there assembled began to laugh by way of restoring the stranger (it was the third month of my residence in England) to his ease. With a composed countenance I turned to the great X —, and assured him that ‘accidents would happen in the best regulated families,’ a pregnant proverb involving the inference that *a fortiori* were they likely to happen when people were packed together in that fashion.

‘The men should be intellectual without pretension, and the women amiable without coquetry.’

Methinks I hear the reader say, ‘It is very easy to give such rules as these, but to be able to comply with them is another thing.’

Perfectly right: it is difficult to follow this direction, and I am glad you appreciate the difficulty. Half the battle is to select your company. It is a work of thought for a bachelor party: when you ask couples the task becomes one of great nicety, and when you mean to invite the men and women separately, all your cleverness and all *Madame’s* will be brought into play. To combine a party of young ladies and unmarried gentlemen, and

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\* WHEREAS arm-chairs are very pleassant on other accounts, they are particularly useful on this, that they prevent the possibility of over-crowding your table.



make the dinner go off well, is the highest triumph of social genius.

On this most important subject a few suggestions may not be altogether out of place.

1. James Smith's rule for a literary bachelor party is, eight guests: six talkers; two listeners.

*Scholium.* The most valuable guest is he who can be a talker or a listener, according to the company he is in. This requires a man to be brilliant, sensible and modest, a rare and happy union of qualities.

2. Beware of bringing too many lions together: they are not apt to roar in perfect concert. This is a very natural error when you are feasting a stranger or foreigner. Anxious to show off to him the celebrities of your place and your acquaintance with them, you are tempted to ask all the men of note your room and table will hold, forgetting the first rule, that to give talkers their fair chance, there must be listeners.

3. Avoid all *bas bleus*.

4. Avoid all men who, as was said of Coleridge, 'have a talent for monologue.' Any one who will monopolize the conversation, however great his talents and acquirements may be, is oppressive at a dinner. The places for such people are *soirées* und *conversaciones*, where they can lecture to circles of admirers.

5. One *fool positive*, that is to say an individual who persists in making stupid remarks, whether talked to or not, is enough to spoil a whole party.

6. Some of the very pleasantest parties are those made up of persons who have at some period of their lives been intimate; but who, by their daily pursuits or other circumstances are prevented from meeting very often. This is the remark of a shrewd English friend: it has a relation with BRILLAT-SAVARIN'S precept, that 'the pursuits of the guests should be various and their tastes analogous.'

'The dishes should be most carefully selected and not too numerous, and the wines the very best, each of his kind.'

The other precepts I omit, because some of them, such as those relative to the coffee and the liqueurs, have been already anticipated, and others relative to temporary fashions, such as tea, toast and punch, which were



then (in 1825) recently-introduced English novelties. But the last one deserves attention.

'No one should go before eleven, but every one should be in bed by twelve.'

This corresponds to the Englishman's rule who hung over the chimney-piece of his dining-room: '*Come at seven, go at eleven.*'

But one day an erratic friend, who wished to prolong the festivities, inserted a monosyllable which materially changed the nature of the precept, for it then read: '*Come at seven, go IT at eleven.*' And they did 'go it' accordingly.

This closing precept takes it for granted that the guests have no other engagement that night. But from a dinner to an evening party or ball is a natural and customary progress, and therefore the natural arrangement seems to be that your carriage should come to take you *from* one just in time to take you *to* the other. And this reminds of another argument in favor of the English habit of remaining at table. I occupies an hour or two agreeably, which by the pseudo-Gallic innovation is utterly thrown away. What earthly use is there in breaking up your dinner-party at eight or half-past eight when no one goes to a ball before ten? Or if there is no ball to go to, it is even worse. You reach home before nine: it is too early to go to bed, and your evening is just broken up. If I had quoted all SAVARIN'S maxims, you would have seen that his post-prandial arrangements are not so directly antagonistic to those of the English. The *sederunt* is transferred from the dining-room to the drawing room; there is whist for the gentlemen instead of politics, and punch instead of claret; but one of the great ends, repose and ease in the house where you have just dined, is attained by analogous, though different means.

Our next halting place in the physiology shall be the meditations on corpulence. The reader must not be too startled at hearing that one cause of obesity is — eating and drinking too much. The quality of the aliment however, has as much to do with the matter as the quantity. *Bread is exceedingly fattening*; those therefore who are inclined to be corpulent should eat but little, and that little of *rye*. They should also avoid eggs, potatoes,



rice, pastry and other farinaceous substances. (I am afraid this last sentence reads somewhat like the grocer's sign, — *Soap, candles, blacking and other vegetables for sale here*. Don't put down the confusion to BRILLAT-SAVARIN'S discredit; it is all my fault. I am trying to condense the substance of his remarks as much as possible, for this grave treatise which set out to be eight pages, has run on to a length that frightens me; and hence you see *dum brevis esse laboro*, etc.) They must also have a horror of beer. So much for negatives; for positive remedies, they must eat radishes and celery and drink seltzer-water and light French wines. The next precept seems somewhat inconsistent with this, for they are commanded to eschew vinegar, and the command is enforced by a touching history of a beautiful girl, who by drinking a glass of vinegar every morning in the foolish hope of thereby reducing her figure, brought herself to a premature grave at the age of eighteen. Finally, it will be well if they can rise early and take much exercise on foot and on horseback, but these recommendations, the author adds, are difficult to follow, and he therefore does not depend much upon them. The chapter in which he enlarges on the difficulties of carrying out these most simple prescriptions is amusingly and at the same time painfully indicative of the Celtic character as contrasted with the Anglo-Saxon. What to an Englishman or Englishwoman is second, nay, *first* nature, is an out-of-the-way and impracticable remedy to a French ditto.

Those unfortunates who suffer from the opposite defect, will of course adopt a contrary regimen, take eggs at breakfast, rice, potatoes and pastry at dinner, and plenty of bread at all times. They will drink beer, (which it is not considered vulgar to do in London and Paris, and which it is supremely absurd to consider unlady-like here, although there *are* dummies among us who if told that a young lady 'drank beer' would look at her as a sort of Lola Montez,) and pay proper attention to sponge-biscuits, macaroons and similar varieties of confectionary. The author expatiates with much feeling on the *régime incrassant*, commencing thus:

'Every lean woman wishes to grow plumper; we have noted the desire in a thousand instances; it is then to render a final homage to the all-powerful sex, that



we shall endeavor to replace by real forms those fictitious charms of silk and cotton which one sees so profusely exposed in the shops, to the great scandal of all rigid moralists who pass by in a tremor and turn away their faces from these chimeras as sedulously as, nay, more so than if the reality were before them.'

Elsewhere in more homely and practical language he says, that 'it is as easy to fatten a woman as a chicken.'

Here is a delicious bit of æsthetic enthusiasm:

'Shun all acids, except salad *which rejoices the heart.*'

Salad as a great many Americans and almost all Englishmen make it, does any thing but rejoice the heart. Will it be believed that in a cookery-book published in this city and sold by several of the principal booksellers, there occurs a *receipt* for dressing salad which leads off thus. 'Take three spoonfuls of oil and *as many of vinegar.*' A mingled feeling of indignation and pity stops my pen. Whoever wrote down that receipt in cold blood ought to be sent forever to where we are about to accompany M. BRILLAT-SAVARIN.

Namely, *Lent*.

Not however with the intention of fasting; the more so as our author expressly condemns fasting as a very bad practice, wherein I take it for granted that my readers are good Protestants enough to agree with him. No, we will only touch on this meditation because it gives a sketch of the manner in which the Parisians at the middle of last century arranged their meals when they were *not* in Lent.

'We used to breakfast before nine on bread and cheese, fruits and sometimes cold meat. [Not in the order in which they are here enumerated it is to be hoped.]

Between twelve and one we dined on the habitual soup and soupbeef, with better or worse accompaniments as our means and other circumstances allowed.

At four there was a lunch, a light meal for the particular benefit of children and of those who piqued themselves on following the usages of antiquity.

But there were *supperish* lunches which began at five and lasted indefinitely.



'About eight came the supper; roast, side-dishes, sweets, salad and dessert.'

That is what we should call a late dinner *minus* the soup and fish. Nature seems to dictate that the principal meal should be taken when the fatigue of the day is over; whether it be called *dinner* or *supper* is a mere fashion of the times.

From speculating on the usages of different ages, the transition is easy to a history of the art. Our author says a great deal about the cookery of the Greeks and Romans, and it would be easy for me to say as much more, and overwhelm you with an ocean of erudition, gossip, and jokes, more or less bad, out of that inexhaustible Athenæus. But nothing is farther from my intention, because, in the first place, our knowledge of the classical *cuisine* is very imperfect when *we come to details*, and secondly, what we do know in a general way does not impress one very favorably. With the deepest veneration for the poetry of the ancients, I have a very moderate opinion of their table-æsthetics. The thick impissated wines, the clumsy fashion of lying down at meals, which no modern but Fanny Kemble has ever been able to practice, the Romans' preference for pork — the Athenians were more æsthetic, and founded their suppers on fish and game — all these and various other peculiarities of theirs, are to us incomprehensible, if not barbarous. One or two things I will just allude to, as they show amusing resemblances in ancient and modern matters. The Greeks had regular bills of fare; so the prince of gossips tells us in his second book. 'When the host had reclined,' he says, 'there was presented a little writing, (*γραμματίδιον τι*,) containing a sketch of the preparations, so that he might know what delicacies the cook was going to serve.'\* And in one of the later books of this indefatigable gourmand there is a list of receipts for making cake, several of which on examination I have found to be, with the substitution of sugar for honey, very good receipts for those good old KNICKERBOCKER preparations, *krullers*, *dough-nuts* and *oely-koeks*. Happening once to mention this to a Cantab friend, he remarked that one of the London University

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\* Deipnosophistæ II., 88 (60).



professors (let us say 'George Long;' for a story is only half a story unless there are some names in it;) had tried to put into practice these very receipts, and made an awful mess of them. Somewhat taken aback by this, I a length bethought me of inquiring whether Long had ever in his life before made cakes of any kind. To which the response was in the negative.

Thirty-eight pages of manuscript, and we are only just at the beginning of the second part of the Physiology! What a pity we cannot linger on that second part! It would have been a rich treat, for here the author drops precept and argument entirely, and indulges himself in illustration and anecdote. I should have liked above all things to relate to you his preservation of a huge turbot's 'entirety' after it had puzzled the *bon vivants* of Villecrène as much as one of its species did Domitian's senate of old; and his Day with the Bernardines, which reminds us of the song about

— 'The monks of old,  
What jolly good souls they were!'

and shows that some of the brotherhood at least have not deteriorated in this respect; and the consternation of innkeeper when required to lodge and entertain a large arrival of English, 'for not more than six francs;' and a dozen other good stories; but it could hardly be done short of this whole number of the KNICKERBOCKER. Let me just give you one anecdote; not because it is by any means the best, but because it is the shortest. The author having been slightly 'done' by an apothecary, is on the point of calling the worthy dispenser of drugs to account, when he is suddenly deterred by remembering the bad success of his friend General BOUVIER in an encounter with one of the fraternity. This general sent for M. BRILLAT-SAVARIN to sustain him in the interview with his apothecary, who had overcharged him; and to the further intimidation of this redoubtable personage he had arrayed himself in full uniform, orders and all. He was just explaining this to our author.

'When even as he spoke the door opened, and we beheld a man of about fifty-five years enter, carefully dressed. He was of lofty stature and sedate step. His whole appearance would have presented a uniform aspect of severity, had not his eyes and mouth together betokened something sardonic in their connection.'



[What a novel SAVARIN might have written if he had tried! Did you ever see a character better introduced? It is a perfect opening of a mysterious chapter.]

'He approached the fire-place, refusing to take a seat, and the following dialogue ensued, which I have faithfully retained in my memory :

'THE GENERAL.

'Sir, this is a regular apothecary's bill that you have sent me, and —

'THE MAN IN BLACK.

'Sir, I am not an apothecary.

'THE GENERAL.

'And what are you then, Sir?

'THE MAN IN BLACK.

'Sir, I practice pharmacy.

'THE GENERAL.

'Very well, Mr. Practiser of Pharmacy, your boy ought to have told you —

'THE MAN IN BLACK.

'Sir, I have no boy.

'THE GENERAL.

'Who was that young man then?

'THE MAN IN BLACK.

'Sir, he is a pupil.

'THE GENERAL.

'Well, Sir, I wished to tell you that your drugs —

'THE MAN IN BLACK.

'Sir, I do not sell drugs.

'THE GENERAL.

'And what do you sell then, Sir?

'THE MAN IN BLACK.

'Sir, I sell medicines.'

'There the discussion finished. The general, ashamed of having committed so many solecisms and of being so little advanced in the knowledge of the pharmaceutic tongue, was thrown into confusion, forgot what he had to say, and paid all that was demanded.'

And now, reader, a word in your ear before we part. Do you prefer that Celtic or Anglo-Saxon principles to prevail in the world? If you have any tendency to the Puritan faith, if you undertake to be a strict moralist and a religious man, you can hardly help desiring



that the latter should triumph. Very well; if you give up the science of table-æsthetics, which has so important an influence on mankind, to the Celts, you leave in their hands a tremendous weapon and means of obtaining power. Ask a Frenchman the reason of his country's ascendancy; and if a conceited man like Michelet, he will tell you that it is because France has lavished more blood and treasure and labor in the cause of humanity than all the other nations in the world together, which is — very much after the manner of Michelet; or if you ask a more modest man, like our physiologist, he will say that it is because the French are so obliging in their intercourse with strangers as always to let themselves down to the level of their capacity; of the truth of which those who have travelled abroad can judge for themselves. But the true secret is, depend upon it, the progress which the French have made in the arts of dress and cookery, wherein, notwithstanding occasional absurdities, they on the whole very much surpass the rest of the world. By the former they gain the women; by the latter, both sexes. Will you yield them without an effort the whole of this advantage, or try to put yourself as nearly on an equal footing as you can? 'What's the reason the devil should have all the good tunes?' said some great divine; Calvin, was it, or Wesley? 'What's the reason the French should have all the good dinners?' says

CARL BENSON.

The following letter explains itself in connection with the above.

'20, Rue Barbet-de-Jouy, Paris, February 22, 1854.

'DEAR KNICK.:

'Les absens ont toujours tort.'

'THE proverb may be truer in French than in some other languages, but it is tolerably pertinent in all. Frequently of late has it recurred to me, owing to the non-appearance of the KNICKER-BOCKER in these parts; and when, at last, the January number turned up, it appeared that you had been forgetting old friends in more ways than one. For there, in black and white, was to be found this confession: 'It is a curious circumstance, of which until now we were ignorant, that SAVARIN was a political exile in America,' etc. 'Until now we were ignorant!' O KNICK., it's too bad of you! Have you forgotten that article I wrote you in 1848 about BRILLAT-SAVARIN, wherein was pointed out, with becoming emphasis, the



extreme modesty of the distinguished exile, whereby, as he says, he made himself so popular among us, namely, pretending *not to be cleverer than the Americans, (n'avoir plus d'esprit qu'eux?)*

'Perhaps you have forgotten it; and perhaps you may say to me, or some of your readers for you: 'Here is KNICK. receiving barrels of MSS. every week from all parts of the civilized world; publishing thirty articles a month, to say nothing of the unpublished and unpublishable ones; do you think he recollects what you or any one else wrote him six years ago?' To which I must answer as Lord LONDONDERRY did to the British Ambassador at Constantinople. Lord LONDONDERRY (his name is *Vane* LONDONDERRY, a name *phusei*, and not *thesei*, as the Greeks used to say) being at Constantinople, wanted to see all the lions there, and among other things to be presented to the SULTAN; and asked the British Ambassador accordingly:

'My dear Lord LONDONDERRY,' said the Ambassador, 'the operation is both difficult and dangerous, besides being unusual; it is customary to make presents to the SULTAN, but not presentations: as a general rule, I don't introduce any body.'

'My dear Lord,' (whatever-his-name-was.) said LONDONDERRY, 'I am not *any body*, and am not subject to general rules.'

'So I say fearlessly that I am not subject to general rules, and still less was the subject of that article. For were we not *both* interested therein, with the interest that comes from knowledge and appreciation? Were not the observations of BRILLAT-SAVARIN really *phonanta synetosisin* in our case? Was not almost the very last thing I did in America to partake of your hospitality, in company, I recollect, with that illustrious man, the editor of the *Bunkum Flag-Staff*, when we discussed various ways of cooking oysters, and oysters cooked in various ways?

'Well, I remember the article, at any rate, if you don't; and all the origin and getting-up of it; how I was reading BRILLAT-SAVARIN in the library of HENRY BREVOORT, (*sit ei terra levis!*) and casually observed to him that it would be a good theme for a magazine paper; how he happened to meet you next day, and made the same observation; and how the day after came to me a little note from your 'sanctum,'

'DEAR B—: When will that article of yours on BRILLAT-SAVARIN be ready?'

which sudden taking me up on a barely expressed opinion without any intention involved, did not, nevertheless, surprise me in the least; for we were used to that sort of thing. Didn't DUYCKINCK — peace to the *manes* of the *Literary World*! how much of ours and our friends lies buried with it! that's always the way; 'I never had a dear ga-



zelle,' etc., but it was sure not to pay expenses and stop publication, as DICK SWIVELLER might say — didn't DUYCKINCK use to stop me in the street and order an article on MENANDER, for instance, without waiting to ascertain whether I had ever read the classic in question? Then he would add, by way irresistible clincher, 'You know you're the only man that can do it,' a sort of panegyric ellipsis for 'you know you're the only man that will do it without a con-side-ra-tion.' So *being* used to that sort of thing, we went to work with a will, and were a full week polishing up the article to the best of our small ability. And when it came out in the full glory of KNICK's best type, all our æsthetic friends did us the honor to — say they would look at it; and the fame of it spread so far in a certain circle that old BACCHUS, who had never been known to go to any great expense for literature, actually offered to — read the magazine if I would send him a copy; whereupon I incontinently told him that he might go to the — club, and read it there.

'But after all, it is as well that periodical literature should be forgotten from season to season; it gives the same things a chance of being said more than once. Not that I have any intention of so doing, or of inflicting any *rifacimento* of that article on you; but the mention of BRILLAT-SAVARIN naturally suggests some reflections on his speciality to one dwelling in the scene of his most brilliant labors; where, indeed, you are continually reminded of him by the sight or other experience of a cake that bears his name — just as CHATEAUBRIAND, another great celebrity in his way, is immortalized in a particular description of beef-steak, one of twice the usual thickness.

'It is very easy to sneer at the art of table-æsthetics, and not difficult to sermonize against it, which does not in the least prevent its being a valuable product and adjunct of civilization. Having on the already-referred-to former occasion fully set forth the economical advantages derived from a knowledge of the art, I shall now pass over that head *sicco pede*. As to the physical, it is obvious that well-cooked dishes are more digestible and nourishing than imperfectly cooked ones, not to speak of the fearful stimulus given to intemperance in liquor and immoderate use of tobacco by unwholesome and unsatisfactory dinners. The temperance of the French is almost proverbial. Still greater are the social benefits resulting from our art. For how much ill-temper, hatred, envy, malice, and all uncharitableness are the cooks of the Great Republic accountable! I am sure that the good folks who like to vent their spite upon us absentees would be in better humor if they had better dinners. What has increased the profusion and waste of our entertainments till fashionable society has degenerated into a mere round of showy restaurant dinners and suppers? what more than the impossibility of giving quiet little



dinners and suppers from one's own kitchen? How many Gothamites would dare ask a friend to take pot-luck with them at an hour's notice, and how many friends would dare to accept such an invitation? Here it is nothing uncommon, which is enough to account for *society being more sociable*.

'What,' says some indignant moralist, 'do you mean to hold up French society as a pattern to us virtuous republicans?'

'By no means, my friend, not as a general rule; only in this particular. But if any man seriously thinks that the immorality of the French is owing to their knowing how to cook good dinners, and eat them when cooked, why then, in the words of THUCYDIDES, 'I felicitate him on his simplicity, but do not commend his cleverness.' You might with as much reason attribute it to their temperance. A certain amount of physiological ease might be made out for that paradox. A more plausible objection may be started. I may be reminded that the English, who are the greatest people in the world, excepting, of course, the Americans, and the finest and healthiest-looking people in the world, not excepting even the Americans, are far behind several European nations in all arts pertaining to cookery. The objection looks formidable. But let us 'discriminate the difference,' as a logical friend of mine used to say before entering into any discussion. Let us look at the question from all its points of view. The English are gross and careless feeders just as they are capacious and indiscriminate drinkers. Their moist climate and *the great quantity of open-air exercise they take*, enable them to consume, without injury, a great amount of heavy viands and strong potables. But the diet that an Englishman can thrive on in his own country, would be ruinous to an American, or even to an Englishman in America. The liquids which the former can imbibe like water would set the latter on fire; the solids which nourish the one would *indigest* (to coin a Gallicism) the other. It is very doubtful if our climate *allows* as much exercise as that of England, and quite certain that it does not *encourage* as much. Our people, therefore, require a better system of cookery than the English. All the refinements of the table, it is said, are mere creatures of an artificial state of society. Very true; so are all refinements and improvements in dress, in domestic architecture, in all the comforts of material civilization as distinguished from intellectual cultivation. Is that a reason for despising them? A celebrated novelist has drawn an amusing picture of ADAM and EVE's perplexity and discomfort when transported to a well-spread modern dinner-table; but would they not be equally perplexed at any tailor's or dress-maker's, or, for that matter, inside of any modern house? If the example of our first parents is a precedent for going back to a fruit and cold-water diet, it will equally justify us in adopting their very



primitive toilette, or in 'camping out' instead of sleeping on comfortable beds under a weather-tight roof.

'No doubt there is a certain amount of fashion and custom in table-æsthetics, as there is in almost every thing, from crime to mathematics; and these fashions and customs, change from time to time. In DEAN SWIFT'S day (as we learn from his *Polite Conversation*) the English used to eat soup in the middle of the dinner which moves THACKERAY'S wonder exceedingly. 'What sort of society could it have been?' he asks with natural astonishment. And yet fish, which, according to THACKERAY'S countrymen and ours, comes the very next to soup, has not yet had its place perfectly defined on continental tables. The French used to eat it after the *entrées* and just before the roast, although most of them have now adopted the Anglo-Saxon order. But perhaps THACKERAY would be somewhat surprised if he were told that in a part of his own county, at the present day, soup is eaten after meat, namely, at the Pensioner's table of Trinity College, Cambridge, where probably THACKERAY ate it so himself in his undergraduate days. The reason assigned to me for this practice was, that the meat being put upon the table at the beginning of dinner would grow cold if not eaten first, while the soup, being an extra, might be ordered hot from the kitchen at any stage of the repast. It is not every custom that can give so good a reason for itself.

'But THACKERAY was right in his question. It is strictly philosophical to begin a dinner with soup, as it obviates the necessity for drinking, which many, perhaps most persons, feel at the commencement of a meal. The preliminary whet of oysters, like the *chasse* after the coffee, must be considered an over-refinement of luxury only suited to great occasions, and not to the dinner of every-day life.

'And similarly, I believe that most of the rules of a scientific and æsthetic dinner may be explained and defended as *bons in se*, and not arising from any caprice of fashion. Thus, to take a fundamental principle — the division into courses — eating one thing at a time instead of every thing in a heap — does it not commend itself to the educated man's finer feelings instinctively? There is much barbarism ament this matter in our country; not merely in the frontier regions of it, either. One of my first experiences in New-England, when a lad of sixteen, was dining out, and having seven kinds of meat and vegetables clapped upon my plate at once. Probably my hosts thought it rather a proof of their civilisation. I recollect once talking to the 'gentleman' who interpreted for some travelling Indian chiefs. He said that these sons of the forest had many habits different from those of civilized people; for instance, they only took one kind of food on their plate at once when dining. Poor man! he little guessed that his barbarous charges resembled,



in this respect, the most refined inhabitants of the French capital, who would have put him down for any thing but a civilized man if they had seen him eat.

'For my part, I thoroughly believe that the dinner-cooking and dinner-giving arts have arrived at a state much nearer the perfection of reason and common-sense than many other arts of modern society; much nearer than that of dress, for instance. What, I wonder, will some future and wiser generation think of our ladies' low-necked ball-dresses, whether as regards decency, comfort, or symmetry? What of the street-sweeping skirts? What will it think of that acme of inaptitudes, the common domestic masculine hat? You may hear men wishing to live to or through some great epoch; till the next French Revolution but three; or till MACAULAY has finished his history, or till the conversion of the South-Sea Islanders. I should like to live to see the conversion of the civilized world — from the absurdity of the present civilized hat.

'Some of the varieties in the table-æsthetics of different countries may be easily accounted for by the different capacities and temperaments of nations. Thus, the genial Anglo-Saxon custom of post-prandial *sederunts* would be perilous to the Gaul, who is so light-headed as to be unequal to combining the usual consumption of wine on such occasions with the equilibrium necessary for the drawing-room afterward. So, too, in the distribution of wines during dinner. Anglo-Saxons begin with champagne after the soup, or at latest after the fish, reserving the claret for the close of the banquet; in France it is not uncommon to drink the best Bordeaux in the earlier stages of the dinner, and only open a bottle of champagne just before the dessert. Each custom is in accordance with the character of the people that follows it. The Anglo-Saxon, grave and phlegmatic, is excited to a proper spirit and liveliness by the early introduction of the champagne, which would make the Frenchman *too* gay before the close of the dinner; he goes on upon his own natural spirits and the quieter red wines, till, when tired of talking and eating, a glass or two of the sparkling beverage winds him up and sets him going again.

'One thing I never could account for — the German habit of eating sweet puddings *before* the roast. Most dietetic barbarisms can be explained. When the Down-Easter or Backwoods-man heaps from six to sixteen different viands on his plate at once, it exemplifies his promiscuous acquisitiveness and indiscriminating haste. But the German mind is orderly and logical; how could it have admitted the solecism of the misplaced puddings?

'Although self debarred at the outset from dwelling on the economic side of the subject, I cannot help remarking how much of the animal and vegetable world is wasted in various countries through culinary ignorance. The English use buckwheat only to feed pheasants



being utterly unaware what excellent pan-cakes it affords. Some European nations are equally ignorant of the pumpkin's utility for human sustenance. We Americans make a very inferior pie of it, tasting something like wet ginger-bread — a dish the offspring of necessity in the infancy of New-England when the unfortunate inhabitants had nothing else to make pies of, and which, with their usual *cycnanserifying* propensity — that is to say, their habit of making swans out of geese — they have imposed upon the Union at large, as something not only eatable, but palatable. The French have put the vegetable to its right use: they make a most delicious soup of it.

I fancy, too, that many ripe figs must be wasted in our Southern States. Now the Southern French have a way of preserving theirs. Dismiss from your mind, I beg of you, all ideas of the Eastern, drum-packed, flat-pressed, mite-nourishing commodity. No, these figs (they are large green ones, like the best Italian) are round and swelling, slightly candied on the outside, yet not so as to disguise entirely their native emerald hue: all fresh and luscious inside with all their original juices — a delight of children, and not to be despised by parents. The sellers of comestibles call them *golden figs* (*figues d'or*), and they well merit the appellation.

'Perhaps some of your unsophisticated country readers may imagine that I am going to enlarge on the value of the *frog* as an article of food, for it is one of our popular delusions (derived from the English, who have long since outgrown it) that this amphibious animal is a usual and favorite Parisian *plat*. I fancy you would be as likely to see a *vol-au-vent de grenouille* at a French restaurant as a colt-steak or rattlesnake fricassee at one of our hotels. Yet truth compels me to say that I once heard a Frenchman (he was an officer and a gentleman, and belonged to the aristocratic *faubourg St. Germain*) boast of having eaten a dish which throws all possible frogs into the shade; to wit, a *fox*! He said it tasted *like game, only more so*! I suspect, however, that he was joking. We had been talking of unusual meats, and I mentioned having eaten *peacock* and *swan*. He probably thought I was quizzing him, and wanted to cap my story.

'And now this indefinite letter has rambled on far enough. *Vale vive que* KNICK., which means, may you live a thousand years, and always have a good cook. 'CARL BENSON.'

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## A TALE ABOUT THE PRINCESS.

American Review, July 1848.

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CARL BENSON'S LIBRARY. *Present:* CARL AND FRED PETERS.

PETERS. And so Carl, while I have been in the thickest of the stirring times abroad, and seen one monarchy topple after another, you have been quietly reading at home. And that gray-covered book is poetry of course.\*

BENSON. It is TENNYSON'S PRINCESS.

PETERS. Oh, Tennyson! Yes, I remember you always had a great admiration for him — not but what he is justly entitled to a good standing among the secondary poets.

BENSON. Perhaps you would be surprised to hear Tennyson spoken of as a greater poet than Byron.

PETERS. Ay, that should I.

BENSON. And yet such is at present the opinion of a very large number of the best educated men in England.

PETERS. Indeed! I knew that of late years Wordsworth had become the fashionable poet of his literary countrymen, but did not suspect that they had now set up a new idol in his place.

BENSON. The process is natural enough. Men grow sated with passion and excitement; they rush for relief to quiet meditation. The popular taste passes from poetry which defies theory and morality to poetry which is all theory and morality. In time the proper medium between and union of the two begins to be seen and appreciated. The literary world has its oscillations of this sort as well as the political.

PETERS. This then you are disposed to consider Tennyson's great merit, that he is a uniter and harmonizer of the two opposite schools, the Byronic and the Wordsworthian?

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\* Fred talks Yorkshire, but writes as pure English as any of us, so that it is only doing him justice to translate his remarks into the ordinary dialect.



BENSON. I am, though well aware it is not the ground that most of his admirers would take. They would make him (so far as they would allow him to have any master) a follower of Wordsworth. But the passionate element is certainly very predominant in him at times, sufficiently so to have annoyed some over-proper people here. And I do consider this fusion or eclecticism, or whatever you choose to call it, as one mark of a great poet, because it gives a truer representation of man than is afforded by either of the schools which it combines. The slave of passion, on however grand a scale he may be depicted, is a low development of our nature. The meditative philosopher is a high, but an incomplete development. You would not choose as your type of government an unbridled democracy or an immovable conservatism, but one in which the two parties had room and scope to struggle. So in the man, you wish to see the play of his feelings and the supervision of his judgment, his better reason prevailing in the end amid the conflict of his passions, but only "saving him as by fire." And where in modern poetry will you find a greater example of this than in Locksley Hall?

PETERS. What is the reason then that some people complain of Tennyson's writing namby-pamby, and emasculating poetry?

BENSON. Simply because some people are dummies. I can understand a charge of this kind as applied to Mrs. Hemans, or Keats, or Wordsworth, (not meaning that I should agree with the man who makes the charge, but I can see why he makes it;) but as applied to Tennyson it seems to me neither more nor less than absurd. There is pathos and sentiment in him: there are passages which may make those cry who are cryingly disposed. In the name of Apollo and the nine Muses, is that to be set down to his discredit? Read Locksley Hall, I say again, and read Morte d'Arthur, and then tell me that the man who wrote them has emasculated poetry. Bulwer and Mrs. Norton, whichever it was of them that perpetrated the New Timon, might write their heads off before they could achieve two poems that will live alongside of those. Ought a man *never* to feel pensive? Is it a crime to be sometimes moved by the pathetic? I well remember that I used to lie on a green bank of summer



mornings and read Theocritus till I was full of pity for Daphnis and the unfortunate man who "had a cruel companion;" but I never found that it unfitted me for taking a horse across country or digging up hard words out of a big lexicon at the proper time.

PETERS. Yes, I remember Romano and you lying on that very bank you are thinking of, between the Trinity bridge and the Trinity library, and him making his confession thus: "I acknowledge the influence of the scene. At this moment any one might do me."

BENSON. There was a man of the world who was not ashamed to be sentimental, and why should a poet be?

PETERS. Thus far you have praised Tennyson's taste and judgment rather than his genius and originality, it seems to me. What peculiar and individual merits do you find in his poetry?

BENSON. In the first place, wonderful harmony of verse; in the second —

PETERS. Wait a moment, and let us dispose of the first place before going further. It really surprises me to hear you make such a point of Tennyson's harmony, for he is frequently blamed on this very head. There are some violent, old-fashioned elisions, to which he is over-prone —

BENSON. Such as "i' the" for "in thee."

PETERS. Exactly; and though not professing to have read his poems critically, I would engage to point you out a number of lines in them which contain weak or superfluous syllables.

BENSON. It must be confessed that occasional blemishes of the sort may be detected in him, yet it is scarce possible to read one of his poems carefully through without being struck with his exquisite sense of melody. Try it especially with his blank verse: — blank verse, as every judge of verse knows, is a much greater trial of an author's powers of versification than any rhyming metre. Read *Cenone* or *Morte d'Arthur*, and you will see what I mean.

PETERS. But after all, allowing what you claim, is not this a small matter to build a poetic reputation on? You may have mere nonsense verses, like the "Song by a Person of Quality," perfect in the way of rhythm



and metre: indeed it is a very common device of small poets to make sound supply the place of sense.

BENSON. It is also a very common device of people who are not poets at all to profess themselves such geniuses that they can despise the ordinary laws of versification. An every-day trick that, and a sad nuisance are these little great men who set up to write poetry without being able to write verse. Is the most correct and elegant prose translation of a passage from Homer or Dante poetry? The question seems almost absurd, but why isn't it poetry? There are all the ideas of the original. It is the vehicle of them that makes the essential difference. And any tangible and practicable definition of poetry must somehow include *metrical expression*; if you admit one independent of this element, you may be driven to allow that the Vicar of Wakefield is a poem, to which felicitous conclusion I once pushed a transcendentalist who was arguing the point with me.

PETERS. But metrical excellence is, to a certain extent at least, a matter of study and practice.

BENSON. What then?

PETERS. Why, you know, *poeta* —

BENSON. *Nascitur* to be sure. Which means that unless a man has a genius for poetry he can never be made a poet. And the very same thing is true of the painter or the mathematician. A man requires education for everything, even for the proper development of his physical powers.

PETERS. Of course you except political wisdom and statesmanship, which in a democracy come to every man by nature, like Dogberry's reading and writing.

BENSON. Of course. But no man can afford to despise the rudiments of art, I don't care what his natural genius is. What would you say to a young painter who should refuse to study anatomy and perspective?

PETERS. Then you think it as necessary for a poet *in posse* to study metre, as for a painter *in posse* to study anatomy?

BENSON. *Rem acu.*

PETERS. You were going to mention another excellence of Tennyson.

BENSON. Yes, his felicity of epithet. You may go through his two volumes without finding a single otiose



adjective. Now it is the happy employment of adjectives that especially makes descriptive writing, whether in prose or poetry, picturesque; and therefore in *Idylls* — *εἰδύλλια* — *poems which are little pictures*, or each a series of pictures, Tennyson has no equal since his master in that branch of poetry, Theocritus.

PETERS. You seem to have studied your man well, and therein you would have the advantage of me in a discussion. But let me ask you one question. Do you honestly think, to say nothing of this country, that Tennyson will ever have the same continental reputation that Byron has?

BENSON. I do not, for a very good reason. Tennyson is decidedly a more national poet than Byron. Indeed, there is nothing national in the latter. There is nothing in him that a Frenchman or an American cannot appreciate as well as an Englishman; nay, there are many things which a Frenchman can appreciate better than an Englishman, because they are more in accordance with his feelings and sympathies. Whereas —

PETERS. You must make an exception in favor of Byron's satires on contemporary English poets.

BENSON. To be sure; but they are certainly not the poems on which his continental reputation in any way depends. Tennyson, on the other hand, is eminently an English poet. He likes to take his subjects from English country life, or English popular stories; and some of his shorter poems are simply and distinctly patriotic, embodying the liberal conservatism of an enlightened English patriotism.

PETERS. I remember one beginning —

"Love thou thy land with love far brought  
From out the storied Past."

BENSON. There is a finer one than that:

"Of old sat Freedom on the heights,  
The thunders breaking at her feet;  
Above her shook the starry lights.  
She heard the torrents meet."

PETERS. Yes, I recollect; and how she gazes down from her isle-altar, and turns to scorn with lips divine the falsehood of extremes. There is nothing violently or offensively national in that.



BENSON. He began with a great deal more spice. In one of his earlier volumes there is a sort of war-song conceived in a spirit of magnificent national conceit. It starts with this satisfactory assumption: —

‘ “There is no land like England  
Where’er the light of day be;  
There are no men like Englishmen,  
So true of heart as they be.”

And there is a pious and benevolent refrain or chorus, after this fashion: —

“For the French, the pope may shrive them,  
For devil a whit we heed them;  
As for the Fench, God speed them  
Unto their heart’s desire,  
And the merry devil drive them  
Through the water and the fire.”

After all, I like a man to stand up for his country. We don’t do it half enough.

PETERS. Whom do you mean by *we*?

BENSON. You and I, Whigs and Locos, and everybody. But to return to our Tennyson. There is another reason for his being “caviare to the general,” even in his own country. His mind is classically moulded, and his poems full of classical allusions. The influence of Homer and Theocritus especially is constantly traceable in his writings; and his felicitous imitations and suggestive passages constitute one of his greatest charms to the liberally educated. Sometimes he is harsh, if not unintelligible to the uninitiated, as when he says that Sir Bedivere stood with Excalibur,

“This way and that *dividing the swift mind*  
In act to throw;”

which reads very stiff till you recollect the Homeric

*δαϊζόμενος κατὰ θυμὸν  
διχθαδὶ.*

PETERS. I would go farther yet, and say that a man, to appreciate Tennyson fully, must be artistically educated and be familiar with Claudes, and Raphaels, and Titians. That was what struck me some time ago, on reading his Palace of Art, (at the recommendation



of an admirer, who considered it his *chef d'œuvre*,) and your last remark, together with what you said just before about his picturesqueness, reminded me of it. I certainly am inclined to think with you, that Tennyson, like Shelley, will always be "caviare to the general," and therefore — but we won't quarrel. I have one more question to ask you. Don't you think that Tennyson owes some of his present reputation to clever friends? Isn't he the pet of his university? Is there not a certain club of Cambridge men that you once told me of?

BENSON. They are not all Cantabs — some Oxonians like Arnold's pupil and biographer Stanley, and some non-university men like Carlyle. They comprise lions of all sorts, greater and less; humorists, with Thackeray of Punch at their head; artists; literary men of fashion; theologians, (did you ever read Maurice's Kingdom of Christ?) and plenty of reviewers. A poet who has generally one of his club in the Edinburgh and occasionally another in the Quarterly, stands a chance of having full justice done him. At the same time it is only fair to remember, Fred, that laudatory criticism is at times essential to justice, especially after unjust and one sided treatment, like the first notice the Quarterly took of Tennyson. Nor can the Tennysonians be charged with anything more than this. You cannot justly impute to them any mere puffery, or extravagant, because unqualified, panegyric. Take Sterling's review, (lately republished in a volume of his works;) there is no horror of fault-finding in it. When he doesn't like a poem he says so. How different from the mutual *criticisms* of a society of mutual admirationists!

PETERS. You are brim-full of your author, I see, and ready to lecture on him. Suppose you give me some account of his new poem there, (*sotto voce*,) especially as there will be more chance of getting something to drink after it.

BENSON. That will I. It is a queer thing certainly, this poem. "A medley" he calls it, and so it is — a medley of grave and gay, where, like his own holiday rustics, he in one place pursues sport and philosophy hand in hand, in another, pure sport. The poet goes to see a jolly baronet, whose son, Walter, is one of his



college friends. It is a fair summer day, and there is a fête to the tenantry. Walter shows his guest the house: —

"Greek, set with busts; from vases in the hall  
Flowers of all heavens, and lovelier than their names,  
Grew side by side; and on the pavement lay  
Carved stones of the Abbey-ruin in the park,  
Huge Ammonites, and the first bones of time;  
And on the tables every clime and age  
Jumbled together: Celts and Calumets,  
Claymore and snow-shoe, toys in lava, fans  
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,  
Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,  
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-club  
From the isles of palm; and higher on the walls,  
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,  
His own forefathers' arms and armor hung."

All which is very fine; but the literary visitor is sure to make for the books, and dive into

"a hoard of tales that dealt with knights,  
Half legend, half historic, counts and kings  
That laid about them at their wills, and died;"

till Walter pulls him out, book and all, to see the grounds and the ruins and the ladies. The happy multitude are scattered about their path.

"A herd of boys with clamor bowl'd  
And stumped the wicket; babies roll'd about  
Like tumbled fruit in grass; and men and maids  
Arranged a country dance and flew thro' light  
And shadow.       \*       \*       \*       \*"

And overhead  
The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime  
Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end."

So they come to the ruins, where Sister Lilia has amused herself by dressing up an old ancestor's statue in new and fashionable woman's attire, and the young men begin to "talk shop," that is, in the present case, to talk college, which brings up the old question of female capacities. At last the guest is called on for a story that shall be moral and amusing both.

PETERS. Unreasonable requisition!

BENSON. Nevertheless, with Cantab assurance, he sets about "making a shot" at it; but, says he —



"One that really suited time and place,  
 Were such a medley we should have him back  
 Who told the Winter's Tale to do it for us:  
 A Gothic ruin, and a Grecian house,  
 A talk of college and of ladies' rights,  
 A feudal knight in silken masquerade,  
 And there with shrieks and strange experiments,  
 For which the good Sir Ralph had burnt them all,  
 The nineteenth century gambols on the grass.  
 No matter: we will say whatever comes:  
 Here are we seven; if each man take his turn  
 We make a sevenfold story."

PETERS. Ah, each man a canto; that would afford  
 room for some pleasant diversities of style and thought.

BENSON. Unfortunately, or fortunately, there is  
 nothing of the kind. The seven cantos, or parts, or  
 fyttes, or whatever you may choose to call them, are  
 all in one continuous vein. Lilia wanted to be a Princess  
 and have a college of her own: he therefore must be a  
 Prince at least, and accordingly a Prince he is, —

"blue-eyed and fair in face,  
 With lengths of yellow ringlet like a girl;  
 For on my cradle shone the northern star.  
 My mother was as mild as any saint —"

PETERS. That "any" is prosaic.

BENSON. "And nearly canonized by all she knew;  
 So gracious was her tact and tenderness;  
 But my good father thought a king a king:  
 He held his sceptre like a pedant's wand  
 To lash offence, and with long arms and hands  
 Reach'd out, and pick'd offenders from the mass  
 For judgment."

This northern Prince had in his boyhood been betrothed  
 to a southern Princess in her girlhood — a regular  
 affair of business, as royal betrothals are.

PETERS. *Only* royal ones, Carl?

BENSON. Don't interrupt me, Fred, for I am like  
 one of your fast trotters, very hard to start again after  
 breaking. So when he was coming to man's estate, his  
 father sent after the lady to fetch her, as per agreement;  
 but instead of the Princess comes



"A present, a great labor of the loom,"

and a letter from *her* father to the effect that she has "a will and maiden fancies," and in short won't be married at any price. You may fancy the old warrior monarch tearing up letter and present, and threatening an appeal to the *ultima ratio*.

PETERS. The Prince resolves to go himself incognito, I suppose.

BENSON. Precisely so, as you shall hear.

"Then ere the silver sickle of that month  
Became her golden shield, I stole from court  
With Cyril and with Florian" —

(These were his two friends, and the latter has a sister in the Princess's court,)

"With Cyril and with Florian, unperceived.  
Down from the bastion walls we dropt by night  
And flying reached the frontier; then we crost  
To a livelier land, and so by town and thorpe,  
And tilth, and blowing bosks of wilderness,  
We gain'd the mother city thick with towers;"

(How like a journey in Fairy land it is, with all those quaint Elizabethan words!)

"And in the imperial palace found the king.  
His name was Gama; crack'd and small his voice,  
A little dry old man, without a star,  
Not like a king."

This little old king, who was as oily as one of your third-rate, shake-your-hand-with-two-fingers *diplomats*, explained that his daughter had been put up to founding a university for maidens by two widows, (one of them Florian's sister;) whereat the Prince, chafing him on fire to find his bride,

"Set out once more with those two gallant boys,  
Then pushing onward under sun and stars  
Many a long league back to the north," —

(for the summer palace where this female university was founded lay on the northern frontier,) came to an inn near the place, and after a consultation with mine host, hit on the plan of turning ladies for the occasion.



"We sent mine host to purchase female gear;  
Which brought and clapt upon us, we tweezered out  
What slender blossom lived on lip or cheek  
Of manhood; gave mine host a costly bribe  
To guerdon silence, mounted our good steeds,  
And boldly ventured on the liberties."

PETERS. "And so they renished them to ride  
On *three* good renished steeds."

But the thing is an absurdity already. Do you suppose three men among a little town of women, could escape detection three minutes? Do you know three of your acquaintance that you would trust in such a position?

BENSON. I have seen *heaps* of English women quite ungraceful enough to be men in disguise for that matter. Their entry is beautifully described. They come into

"A little street half garden and half house;  
But could not hear each other speak for noise  
Of clocks and chimes, like silver hammers falling  
On silver anvils, and the splash and stir  
Of fountains spouted up and showering down  
In meshes of the jasmine and the rose:  
And all about us peal'd the nightingale,  
Rapt in her song, and careless of the snare."

PETERS. Good! and then?

BENSON. Of course they mean to be *on Lady Psyche's side*, as a Cantab would say, for she is the younger, prettier and better tempered of the two tutors. So the Prince

"sat down and wrote

In such a hand as when a field of corn  
Bows all its ears before the roaring east:  
"Three ladies of the Northern Empire pray  
Your highness would enroll them with your own  
As Lady Psyche's pupils."

And accordingly,

"At break of day the College Portress came:  
She brought us academic silks, in hue  
The lilac, with a silken hood to each,  
And zoned with gold; and now when these were on,  
And we as rich as moths from dusk cocoons,  
She, courtseying her obeisance, let us know  
The Princess Ida waited."



PETERS. Ah, now for the heroine!

BENSON. "There at a board by tome and paper sat,  
With two tame leopards couched beside her throne,  
All beauty compassed in a female form,  
The Princess: liker to the inhabitants  
Of some clear planet close upon the sun,  
Than our man's earth; such eyes were in her head,  
And so much grace and power, breathing down  
From over her arch'd brows, with every turn  
Lived through her to the tips of her long hands,  
And to her feet."

How do you like her?

PETERS. The sketch is too shadowy methinks.  
Not definiteness enough of touch in it, and — surely  
one of those lines halts?

BENSON. Yes, it is one of Tennyson's crotchets  
that *flower* and *power* are full dissyllables. But the Princess  
will define herself better by and by. Of course, Psyche  
finds out her brother, and of course she is persuaded to  
give them a little grace; else how should they and we  
see and hear any more of this Female University life?  
And here is some of what they saw and heard: —

"And then we strolled  
From room to room: — in each we sat, we heard  
The grave Professor. On the lecture slate  
The circle rounded under female hands  
With flawless demonstration: follow'd then  
A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,  
With scraps of thundrous Epic lifted out  
By violet-hooded Doctors, elegies  
And quoted odes, and jewels five-words long,  
That on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time  
Sparkle forever: then we dipt in all  
That treats of whatsoever is, the state,  
The total chronicles of man, the mind,  
The morals, something of the frame, the rock,  
The star, the bird, the fish, the shell, the flower,  
Electric, chemic laws, and all the rest,  
And whatsoever can be taught or known;  
*Till like three horses that have broken fence,*  
And glutted all night long breast-deep in corn  
We issued *gorged with knowledge*, and I spoke:  
'Why, sirs, they do these things as well as we.'



**PETERS.** And to be sure they might, if they were only taught.

**BENSON.** And so might most men sew and play the piano if they were only taught. But whether it would pay is another question. Here is an after-dinner picture: —

“A solemn grace  
Concluded, and we sought the gardens: there  
One walk'd reciting to herself, and one  
In this hand held a volume as to read,  
And smoothed a petted peacock down with that.”

A most lady-like substitute for the small terrier that a Cantab would be promenading about.

“Some to a low song oar'd a shallop by  
Or under arches of the marble bridge  
Hung, shadow'd from the heat: some hid and sought  
In the orange thicket; others tost a ball  
Above the fountain-jets and back again  
With shrieks and laughter. \* \* \*

So we sat; and now when day  
Droop'd, and the chapel tinkled, mixt with those  
Six hundred maidens clad in purest white,  
Before two streams of light from wall to wall,  
While the great organ almost burst his pipes  
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court  
A long, melodious thunder to the sound  
Of solemn psalms and silver litanies,  
The work of Ida to call down from Heaven  
A blessing on her labors for the world.”

You see the finest of these descriptions have an amusing double sense. They are at once a parody on, and a description of English University life.

**PETERS.** Yes, I remember going to Trinity Chapel with you, and those five hundred young men in surplices. How innocent and virtuous they did look — at a distance! I wonder if Princess Ida's girls tattled and gossipped as much when they pretended to be kneeling at prayers. There were two youngsters just in front of us that night who were settling the next boat-race all service time. But certainly there are many delightfully picturesque features in a Cantab's life. By the way, Carl, what has become of your sketches?



BENSON. *Infandum jubes renovare.* They were so free-spoken that no one in this land of liberty dared publish them. But we live in hope. Do you recollect what Punch says of the great Jawbrahim Heraudee, how, after having circumvented his enemies and made a great fortune, he "spent his money in publishing many great and immortal works?" That's what we mean to do some day, so help us Puffer Hopkins!

PETERS. Ominous invocation! But how fares the Prince meanwhile?

BENSON. He is invited to take a geological ride with the Princess. You may be sure he seizes the opportunity to discuss the plan she had made for herself in contrast with that which others had made for her, not forgetting to say a good word or two for himself.

"I know the Prince.

I prize his truth; and then how vast a work  
To assail this gray pre-eminence of man!  
You grant me license; might I use it? Think  
Ere half be done perchance your life may fail;  
Then comes the feebler heiress of your plan,  
And takes and ruins all; and thus your pains  
May only make that footprint upon sand  
Which old recurring waves of prejudice  
Resmooth to nothing: might I dread that you,  
With only Fame for spouse and your great deeds  
For issue, yet may live in vain, and miss  
Meanwhile what every woman counts her due,  
Love, children, happiness?"

And she exclaimed:

'Peace, you young savage of the northern wild.  
What! tho' your Prince's love were like a god's,  
Have we not made ourselves the sacrifice?  
You are bold indeed: we are not talk'd to thus.  
Yet will we say for children, would they grow  
Like field-flowers everywhere! we like them well.  
But children die; and let me tell you, girl,  
Howe'er you babble, great deeds cannot die.  
They with the sun and moon renew their light  
Forever, blessing those that look on them.  
Children — that men may pluck them from our hearts.  
Kill us with pity, break us with ourselves.  
O children! there is nothing upon earth  
More miserable than she that has a son



And sees him err: nor would we work for fame,  
 Tho' she perhaps might reap the applause of Great  
 Who learns the one POU STO whence afterwards  
 May move the world, though she herself effect  
 But little: wherefore up and act, nor shrink  
 For fear our solid aim be dissipated  
 Of frail successors. Would indeed we had been,  
 In lieu of many mortal flies, a race  
 Of giants, living each a thousand years,  
 That we might see our own work out, and watch  
 The sandy footprint harden into stone."

After their philosophic equitation they luxuriate in  
 a tent,

"elaborately wrought  
 With fair Corinna's triumph; here she stood  
 Engirt with many a florid maiden cheek,  
 The woman-conqueror; woman conquered there  
 The bearded victor of ten thousand hymns,  
 And all the men mourned at his side."

There is an instance, one out of many in the poem, of the admirable way in which all the adjuncts are artistically in keeping. Tennyson always seems to keep in mind Fuseli's rule "that all accessories should be allegorical," and this makes him eminently the painter of poets. And now comes what all the critics consider the gem of this work.

PETERS. Isn't it a blank-verse song about "the days that are no more?" I remember seeing that quoted in three London periodicals the same day. I bought them at the railway station.

BENSON. Even the same. There is a unanimity of opinion about it, which it may seem ridiculous to oppose, but I do candidly confess to you that I don't like it as well as some other things in this very poem. Perhaps it is from utter want of agreement with the sentiment. The past is for me a sweet season, not a sad one at all — in consequence no doubt of my fearfully antiquated conservative sympathies. I never could feel, even though a great poet has sung it before Tennyson,

"That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things,"

and therefore —



PETERS. That is the true critical fashion, Carl, to dilate upon your own feelings and neglect your author.

BENSON. Straightforward is the word then. *In vino veritas*. When they begin to drink, the secret's let out and great is the flutter. The Prince, scornfully expelled, lights on the camp of his own father, who had heard of his danger, (it was a capital offence for any male to infringe on the University limits,) and marched down to rescue him. Poor Psyche is there; she has lost herself and her child: hear what a touching lament she makes for it: —

“Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah my child,  
My one sweet child whom I shall see no more!  
For now will cruel Ida keep her back;  
And either she will die from want of care,  
Or sicken with ill usage, when they say  
The child is hers — for every little fault,  
The child is hers; and they will beat my girl,  
Remembering her mother: O my flower!  
Or they will take her, they will make her hard,  
And she will pass me by in after-life  
With some cold reverence worse than she were dead.  
Ill mother that I was to leave her there,  
To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,  
The horror of the shame among them all.  
But I will go and sit beside the doors,  
And make a wild petition night and day,  
Until they hate to hear me like a wind  
Wailing forever, till they open to me,  
And lay my little blossom at my feet,  
My babe, my sweet Aglaia, my one child;  
And I will take her up and go my way  
And satisfy my soul with kissing her:  
Ah! what might that man not deserve of me  
Who gave me back my child?

The medley is true to its name. After this pathos we have some fighting, for there are three brothers of the Princess, tall fellows all, and one, Arac, a tremendous champion. He bullies the Prince, and thereupon the North and South agree to fight it out, fifty to fifty. I am sure Tennyson had the Ivanhoe tournament in his head when he wrote this. Arac knocks over every one, ending with the Prince; but nobody is killed, though



there is much staving in of iron plate and bruising of heads. Then the Princess, under whose very garden wall the *mêlée* has taken place, comes down with her maidens and opens her gates in pity to the wounded, and so the women lose their cause in gaining it. You may imagine the catastrophe — the Prince ill in bed, and the Princess nursing him and reading to him, and what must follow thence. But it is beautifully worked out. He lies in delirium, until she from watching him, and listening to his mutterings, and casting sidelong looks at "happy lovers heart in heart," (what a felicitous expression!) begins herself to know what love is. At last he wakes,

"sane but well nigh close to death,  
For weakness; it was evening; silent light  
Slept on the painted walls, whereon were wrought  
Two grand designs; for on one side arose  
The women up in wild revolt, and storm'd  
At the Oppian law. Titanic shapes, they cramm'd  
The forum, and half crush'd among the rest  
A little Cato cower'd. On the other side  
Hortensia spoke against the tax; behind  
A train of dames: by axe and eagle sat,  
With all their foreheads drawn in Roman scowls,  
And half the wolf's-milk curdled in their veins,  
The fierce triumvirs, and before them paused  
Hortensia pleading: angry was her face.

(How the lion-painters had had it all their own way!  
There is great humor in that picture, as well as artistic  
keeping.)

I saw the forms; I knew not where I was:  
Sad phantoms conjured out of circumstance,  
Ghosts of the fading brain they seem'd; nor more  
Sweet Ida; palm to palm she sat; the dew  
Dwelt in her eyes, and softer all her shape  
And rounder show'd: I moved; I sighed; a touch  
Came round my wrist, and tears upon my hand:  
Then all for languor and self-pity ran  
Mine down my face, and with what life I had,  
And like a flower that cannot all unfold,  
So drench'd it is with tempest, to the sun,  
Yet, as it may, turns toward him, I on her  
Fixt my faint eyes, and utter'd whisperingly:



'If you be what I think you, some sweet dream,  
 I would but ask you to fulfil yourself;  
 But if you be that Ida whom I knew,  
 I ask you nothing; only if a dream,  
 Sweet dream, be perfect. I shall die to-night.  
 Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die!"

Do you remember a somewhat similar appearance in Miss Barrett, where the Lady Geraldine visits her poet-lover, and he takes her for a vision?

"Said he, wake me by no gesture, sound of breath, or stir of  
 vesture—"

PETERS. Excuse me, but I never yet undertook to admire Miss Barrett, and would much rather you should read straight on.

BENSON. It is a pity to interrupt so fine a passage.

"I could no more, but lay like one in trance  
 That hears his burial talked of by his friends,  
 And cannot speak, nor move, nor make one sign,  
 But lies and dreads his doom. She turned; she paused;  
 She stoop'd; and with a great shock of the heart,  
 Our mouths met; out of languor leapt a cry,  
 Crown'd passion from the brinks of death, and up  
 Along the shuddering senses struck the soul,  
 And closed on fire with Ida's at the lips;  
 Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose,  
 Glowing all over noble shame, and all  
 Her falsèr self elipt from her like a robe,  
 And left her woman, lovelier in her mood  
 Than in her mould that other, when she came  
 From barren deeps to conquer all with love,  
 And down the streaming crystal dropt, and she  
 Far-fleeted by the purple island-tides  
 Naked, a double light in air and wave,  
 To meet her graces where they decked her out  
 For worship without end, nor end of mine,  
 Stateliest, for thee!"

PETERS. I suppose our classical poet had one of the Homeric hymns to Venus in his mind, when he sketched that comparison.

BENSON. Possibly, but there is no verbal resemblance that I recollect. Let us see. Here is the shorter Hymn to Aphrodite. You shall have it word for word:



"Fair Aphrodité, goddess golden-crowned,  
 Majestic in her beauty will I sing,  
 Inheritress of all the crowning heights  
 Of sea-beat Cyprus, whence the wat'ry breath  
 Of Zephyr bore her lapped in softest foam  
 Across the loud-resounding ocean wave.  
 Her lovingly the golden Hours received  
 And clad in robes immortal; and they set  
 Upon her head divine a golden crown  
 Well wrought, and fair to look on; in her ears  
 The flower of mountain-brass and precious gold;  
 And they decked out with necklaces of gold  
 Her tender neck and silver-shining breasts.  
 With such the golden Hours themselves bedeck  
 When they betake them to the pleasant dance  
 Of deities, and to their father's home.  
 So having all her person thus adorned  
 They brought her to th' Immortals, who rejoiced  
 To see her."

Homer, as you perceive, dwells upon the ornaments of the goddess more than on her native charms. But now for our Prince and Princess again. He has slept,

"Fill'd thro' and thro' with Love, a happy sleep,"

and is awaked by her reading a sort of serenade to him and a beautiful one it is. Listen: —

"Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white;  
 Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk;  
 Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font:  
 The fire-fly wakens; waken thou with me.  
 Now droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,  
 And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.  
 Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,  
 And all thy heart lies open unto me.  
 Now slides the silent meteor on and leaves  
 A shining furrow, as thy thought in me.  
 Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,  
 And slips into the bosom of the lake,  
 So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip  
 Into my bosom and be lost in me."

By-and-by they come to an explanation. He makes an admirable confession of his faith, and a more admirable explanation and history of it, even thus: —



"'Alone,' I said, 'from earlier than I know,  
 Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world,  
 I loved the woman: he that doth not, lives  
 A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,  
 Or pines in sad experience, worse than death,  
 Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with crime;  
 Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one  
 Not learned, save in gracious household ways  
 Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,  
 No angel, but a dearer being, all dipt  
 In angel instincts, breathing Paradise,  
 Interpreter between the gods and men,  
 Who look'd all native to her place, and yet  
 On tiptoe seemed to touch upon a sphere  
 Too gross to tread; and all male minds perforce  
 Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved  
 And girdled her with music. Happy he  
 With such a mother! faith in womankind  
 Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high  
 Comes easy to him.'"

And this is his satisfactory conclusion: —

"My bride,  
 My wife, my life, O we will walk this world,  
 Yoked in all exercise of noble end,  
 And so thro' those dark gates across the wild  
 That no man knows. Indeed I love thee; come,  
 Yield thyself up: my hopes and thine are one:  
 Accomplish thou my manhood and thyself,  
 Lay thy sweet hands in mine and trust to me."

*Enter the General.*

THE GENERAL. Well, Carl, what's on the tapis now? One of the nine male muses of Boston, eh?

PETERS. No, indeed! but Tennyson's Princess, which our friend is well nigh enchanted with.

THE GENERAL. It is two years or more since I heard Carl talking of that poem. The literati in England must have been expecting its appearance for a long time. And it seems to me surprising that they have not shown more disappointment — that is, if, as seems perfectly natural, they meant to judge it by the standard of the author's former works.

BENSON. Then *you* are greatly disappointed?



THE GENERAL. Not *greatly*, for I never was a violent Tennysonian. But I shall be surprised if you are not dissatisfied.

PETERS. Carl looks incredulous: he wants your reasons, General.

THE GENERAL. He shall have them. First, let us begin with the vehicle and dress of the ideas, the mere structure of the verse. Knowing that you all agree with me in the importance of this, I have no fear of being thought hypercritical. Every one must see on reading the poem, that much of the versification is on the Italian model. Now this may be a perfectly proper innovation. It is possible that

"O swallow, swallow if I could follow and light,"

is as natural and suitable a line in the one language as

"Molto egli opro con senno e con la mano"

is in the other; so I will not dwell on this point, though it certainly admits of dispute. But there are many lines built on no model at all, in short, not verse at all. What do you say to this?

"Strove to *buffet* to land in vain: a tree;"

or this —

"*Timorously* and as the leader of the herd."

And there are plenty not quite so lame as these, but very faulty, such as —

"Albeit so mask'd, madam, I love the truth."

"Of open metal in which the old hunter rued."

"I did but shear a feather, and life and love."

"Life. And again sighing she spoke, 'A dream.'"

Now we have a particular right to animadvert upon these things in Tennyson, because his harmony of versification is always insisted upon (and in many cases I admit with all justice) by his admirers. Here, then, he fails upon his own ground. And it cannot be from haste, for we know that the Princess has been some years in preparation; it must be either from wilful carelessness, or some perversity of theory. So much for the first charge.



Next, there is to be found in this poem a superabundance of quaint and harsh expressions. I do not refer to the affectation of dragging in antiquated words, such as "tilth," and "thorpe," and "enringed;" but to such phrases as these: —

"And then we past an arch  
*Inscribed too dark for legible.*"  
 "On some dark shore *just seen that it was rich.*"  
 "Seldom she spoke, but oft  
 Clomb to the roofs, and gazed alone for hours  
 On that disastrous leaguer, swarms of men  
 Darkening her female field; *void was her use,*"

meaning that "her occupation was gone," I suppose; but it is not easy to get that sense, or any sense out of the words.

The next fault I have to find is a very serious one. Your pet poet, Carl, is terribly gross, repeatedly and unnecessarily so. There, don't make such large eyes, but listen. The Princess

"Was proxy-wedded with a bootless calf,"

to the Prince. Where was the need of allusion or reference to this barbarous and disgusting custom of a dark age? You can't say it was introduced to preserve historical accuracy, for there is no historical or chronological keeping in the poem. The Princess talks geology and nebular hypotheses, and the Prince draws his similes from fossil remains. Then, again, the break at the close of the innkeeper's speech — why, the suggestion conveyed by it would be low for Punch, and only in place in the columns of a Sunday newspaper. And why the Prince's question about the want of anatomic schools in the female University, but for the indiscreet inuendo which it conveys?

BENSON. You grow over nice, General.

THE GENERAL. Nay, if I did, you would hear me objecting to the whole scene of the three young gentlemen's discovery; master Cyril growing tipsy and striking up a questionable ditty,

"Of Moll and Meg, and strange experiences  
 Unmeet for ladies;"

and the Prince "pitching in" to him.



BENSON. Can you suggest any better mode of bringing about the discovery?

THE GENERAL. If no better can be devised, that only throws the objection upon the choice of such a subject.

PETERS. That brings us to the point. Come, General, don't be nibbling all around the poem, like a mouse about a big cheese, but tell us what you think of it as a whole.

THE GENERAL. As a whole, then, let me ask Benson if he considers it to add much to Tennyson's poetic reputation?

BENSON. Is it perfectly fair to expect that each successive work of an author shall equal or surpass his former masterpieces?

THE GENERAL. Somewhat of a Quaker answer, that, but it involves an admission which I accept as a satisfactory reply.

PETERS. I have heard it objected to the Princess, that it was too evidently written with a moral and for a moral, and *therefore* could not be a really great poem.

BENSON. That is really too bad, Fred. According to that rule, no allegorical picture can be a great painting.

THE GENERAL. It certainly is not the objection I should make either. The idea that a great poem cannot have a moral, seems to me as one-sided and untenable as the theory of the extreme Wordsworthians, that a great poem *must* have a moral. My animadversion would be just of the opposite kind — that the subject of the Princess is too slight. It would be well enough for a semi-ludicrous trifle; it is not sufficient for an elaborate poem, the work of years. While reading this production, the suspicion has crossed my mind — a mere suspicion which it is perhaps uncharitable to utter — that Tennyson has intended and striven to be eminently *Shakspearian* in it. Hence his peculiar phraseology, his changes from grave to gay and from gay to grave, his rigorous artistic propriety combined with his almost systematic chronological discrepancy, his introduction of comic characters, (though he must have seen by this time that humor is not his forte;) even the very reference to the Winter's Tale is not without meaning. But Tennyson is said to be a modest man, and it is hardly fair to tax him with



such impudence. But at any rate the Princess goes far to confirm me in the opinion I held before, that long poems are not Tennyson's line, so to speak. And he must have an inkling of this himself, else why does he not finish *Morte d'Arthur*? — which is surely worth finishing, though it might not perhaps be "one of the epics of the world," as Carl thinks. There are many exquisite little gems in the Princess — many of "those jewels five-words long," that the author speaks of; but as a whole, I should be slow to call it a great work of art.

BENSON. There are certainly also many things in it to which the General has taken exception, and which I am not prepared to defend. The thought has struck me that for some or all of these occasional lapses, we may have to thank the so-called "Water Cure" which the author underwent between his former volumes and this.

PETERS. Not a bad idea that, Carl. The result was exceedingly likely.

THE GENERAL. So then the same cause will account for the difference between "Evangeline" and "The Voices of the Night," and that between the Princess and Locksley Hall.

BENSON. Well, we are agreed on one point at any rate. And having settled so much satisfactorily, let us refresh our inner man. Lift up the top of that oak window-seat, Fred; you are the nearest to it. What do you find there?

PETERS. Something that looks very like a *gâté de joie gras* reposing upon some old music; and a little basket with an assortment of soda biscuit and waters, and — is there a Bologna in this roll of yellowish paper?

BENSON. Precisely. Where's the General? Oh, one naturally looks to the other window-seat for the liquids. Quite right. You will find some jolly old Cognac there, and a bottle of the real "Drioli" Maraschino, if you are not above so ladylike a vanity. Help me to clear the table, Fred. Put Dr. Arnold on the top of Vanity Fair, and pitch those Boston reviews into the chiffonier basket. Spread this Literary World out: it will do for an extempore table-cloth. There, we have the edibles and potables arranged! let us give a good account of them.



THE GENERAL. We will endeavor to do them justice, as we have been trying to do justice to the Princess.

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## FANITY FAIR.

American Review, October 1848.

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AN Anglo-Saxon can appreciate, although he may not altogether admire Gallic wit; but a Gaul is hopelessly incompetent to understand Saxon humor.\* It is to him what the Teutonic humor is to both Saxon and Gaul, who suppose it must be humorous to the Teuton because he vastly delights in it, but find it, so far as themselves are concerned, dreary in the extreme, and utterly valueless for purposes of amusement. Here is a book which has a brilliant run in England, where its author is acknowledged as one of the first periodical writers; we doubt if any Frenchman could go through it without falling asleep in spite of the pictures. In our own country, where the original Saxon character has become partially Gallicized, the public opinion (setting aside that class

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\* Nothing shows this more clearly than the use which the French have made, and *not* made, of their own one great humorist. They bray about him of course, for he is part of their natural glory; they talk about reading him — “bring me the tongs and a volume of *Pantagruel*,” as that precious Theophile Gautier says. Possibly they even read him as a bit of “business,” though it may be doubted if he is not and has not generally been more read in England than in France. Certainly he has left a greater impress on English than on French literature. Setting aside minor writers, there is no great modern French author, so *Rabelaisque* as Swift or Southey. Most of the direct and professed imitations of Rabelais which one meets with in modern French are utterly inadequate. *Balzac* *son* *les Drolatiques* are very clever in their way but have little of their model except the antiquated spelling. Even their indecency, on which the author so prides himself in his preface is the indecency of Balzac and not of Rabelais. One man alone among contemporary French authors is imbued with the style and spirit of the old humorist, and that without making any parade of such inspiration; the resemblance too is more striking in the serious than in the comic portions of his works. *Napoleon le petit* is exactly such a book as Rabelais might have written had he been in Victor Hugo’s place.



of readers, unfortunately too large, who are the willing slaves of the publishers, and feel bound to read and talk about a book because it is advertised by a big house, in big letters, as "Thackeray's Masterpiece,") is about equally divided, some much enjoying "Vanity Fair," others voting it a great bore.

French wit and English humor! We do not mean to expatiate on this oft-discussed theme, tempting though it be, affording copious opportunity for antitheses more or less false, and distinctions without differences, but shall merely hint at what seems the most natural way to explain this national diversity of taste and appreciation in respect of the two faculties. Wit consists in the expression more than in the matter — it depends very considerably on the words employed — and hence the wittiest French sayings are, if not inexpressible, at least *inexpressive* in English. Under the homely Saxon garb they generally become very stupid or very wicked remarks — not unfrequently both. But an Englishman with a respectable knowledge of French can understand and be amused by French wit, though he will probably not enter into it very heartily. Humor, on the other hand, depends on a particular habit of mind; so that, to enjoy English humor, a Frenchman must not only understand English, but become intellectually Anglicized to a degree that is unnatural to him. In proof of this, it may be noticed that French-educated or *French-minded* Americans find Thackeray tedious, and (to take a stronger case, where no national prejudice but a favorable one can be at work,) yawn over Washington Irving.

And yet, if we wished to give an idea of Thackeray's writings to a person who had never read them, we should go to France for our first illustration; but it would be to French art, not French literature. No one who has ever been familiar with the pictured representations of Parisian life which embellish that repository of wicked wit, the *Charivari* — no one who knows *Les Lorettes*, *Les Enfants Terribles*, &c., would think of applying to the designs of Gavarni and his brother artists the term *caricatures*. He would say, "There is no caricature about them; they are life itself." And so it is with Thackeray's writings; they present you with humorous sketches of real life — literal comic pictures — never rising to the



ideal or diverging into the grotesque. Thus, while his stories are excellent as a collection of separate sketches, they have but moderate merit *as stories*, nor are his single characters great as single characters. Becky Sharpe is the only one that can be called a first-rate hit; for "Chawls Yellowplush" is characterized chiefly by his ludicrous spelling, and his mantle fits "Jeemes" just as well. And just as Gavarni differs from Hogarth, should we say Thackeray differs from Dickens, a writer with whom he is sometimes compared, and to whom he undoubtedly has some points of resemblance, though he cannot with any propriety be called "of the Dickens school," or "an imitator of Dickens," any more than Gavarni could be called an imitator of Hogarth.

Thackeray has his points of contact, also, with another great humorous writer, Washington Irving. Very gracefully and prettily does Mr. Titmarsh write at times; there is many a little bit, here and there, in the "Journey from Cornhill to Cairo," that would not disgrace Geoffrey Crayon in his best mood. But his geniality is not so genuine, or so continuous. Not that there is anything affected about his mirth — he is one of the most natural of modern English writers: Cobbett or Sidney Smith could hardly be more so; but it is dashed with stronger ingredients. Instead of welling up with perennial jollity, like our most good-humored of humorous authors, he is evidently a little *blazé*, and somewhat disposed to be cynical.

To compare Thackeray with Dickens and Irving, most of our readers will think paying him a high compliment, but we are not at all sure that his set would be particularly obliged to us; for it is the fortune — good in some respects, evil in others — of Mr. Titmarsh to be one of a set. But wherever there are literary men there will be sets; and those who have been bored and disgusted by the impertinence and nonsense of stupid cliques will be charitable to the occasional conceits of clever ones. Having had some happy experience of that literary society which is carried to greater perfection in England than in any other country, we can pardon the amiable cockneyism with which Michael Angelo's thoughts revert to his Club even amid the finest scenery of other lands, and the semi-ludicrous earnestness with which he



dwells on the circumstance of your name being posted among the "members deceased," as if that were the most awful and striking circumstance attendant on dissolution. And, inasmuch as all his books are really books to be read, we can excuse the quiet way in which he assumes that you *have* read them all, and alludes, as a matter of course, to the Hon. Algernon Deuceace and the Earl of Crabs, and such ideal personages, much after the manner of that precious Balzac who interweaves the same characters throughout the half-hundred or more volumes which compose his panorama of Parisian society — a society in which, as Macauley says of another school, "the women are like very bad men, and the men too bad for anything."

This mention of Balzac brings to mind a more serious charge than that of occasional conceit or affectation which we have more than once heard urged against our author; namely, that his sketches contain too many disagreeable characters. A queer charge this to come from a reading generation which swallows copious illustrated editions of *Les Mystères* and *Le Juif*, and is lenient to the loathsome vulgarities of Wuthering Heights and Wildfell Hall. But let us draw a distinction or "discriminate a difference," as a transcendentalist acquaintance of ours used to say. If a story is written for mere purposes of amusement, there certainly ought not to be more disagreeable characters introduced than are absolutely necessary for relief and contrast. But the moral and end of a story may often compel the author to bring before us a great number of unpleasant people. In a former volume of this Review the opinion was pretty broadly stated that no eminent novelist writes merely for amusement without some ulterior aim; most decidedly Thackery does not at any rate. We shall have occasion to refer to this more than once, for it is doing vast injustice to Mr. T. to regard him merely as a provider of temporary fun. He does introduce us to many scamps, and profligates, and hypocrites, but it is to show them up and put us on our guard against them. His bad people are evidently and unmistakably bad; we hate them, and he hates them, too, and doesn't try to make us fall in love with them, like the philosophers of the "Centre of Civilization," who dish you up seraphic poisoners and chaste adulteresses in a way that



perplexes and confounds all established ideas of morality. And if he ever does bestow attractive traits on his rogues, it is to expose the worthlessness and emptiness of some things which are to the world attractive — to show that the good things of Vanity Fair are not good *per se*, but may be coincident with much depravity.

Thus Becky Sharpe, as portrayed by his graphic pen, is an object of envy and admiration for her cleverness and accomplishments to many a fine lady. There are plenty of the "upper ten" who would like to be as "smart" as Rebecca. She speaks French like a French woman, and gets up beautiful dresses out of nothing, and makes all the men admire her, and always has a repartee ready, and insinuates herself every where with an irresistible nonchalance. Then comes in the sage moralist, and shows us that a woman may do all these fine things, and yet be ready to lie right and left to every one, and ruin any amount of confiding tradesmen; to sell one man and poison another; to betray her husband and neglect her child. (That last touch is the most hateful one: in our simplicity we hope it is an exaggeration. That a woman should be utterly regardless of her offspring seems an impossibility — in this country, we are proud to say, it *is* an impossibility.) Or if any of his doubtful personages command our temporary respect and sympathy, it is because they are for the time in the right. Rawdon Crawley is not a very lofty character; he frequently comes before us in a position not even respectable; but when he is defending his honor against the old sybarite Lord Steyne, he rises with the occasion: even the guilty wife is forced to admire her husband, as he stands "strong brave, and victorious." Nor, though he finds it sometimes necessary to expose hypocrites, does Thackeray delight in the existence of hypocrisy, and love to seek out bad motives for apparently good actions. His charity rather leads him to attribute with a most humane irony pretended wickedness to weakness. Your French writer brings an upright gentleman before the footlights, and grudges you the pleasure of admiring him; he is impatient to carry him off behind the scenes, strip off his Christian garments, and show him to you in private a very fiend. But Thackeray, when he has put into a youth's mouth an atrociously



piratical song, is overjoyed to add quietly that he "remembers seeing him awfully sick on board a Greenwich steamer."

Thus far our description has been one of negatives. It is time to say something of the positive peculiarities of Mr. T., two of which are strikingly observable, — the one in his serious, the other in his comic vein. We shall begin by the latter, for though to us he is greater as a moralist than as a humorist, we are well aware that the general opinion is the other way, and that he is most generally valued for his fun. Many of the present English comic writers excel to an almost Aristophanic degree in parody and travestie, but in the latter Thackeray is unrivalled. Now he derides in the most ludicrous jargon, the absurd fopperies of the Court Circulars: "Head dress of knockers and bell-pulls, stomacher a muffin;" now he audaciously burlesques the most classic allusions "about Mademoiselle Arianne of the French Opera, and who had left her, and how she was consoled by Panther Carr." Some men have that felicity in storytelling that they will make you laugh at the veriest Joe Miller as if it had been just invented, and similarly there is nothing so old or so dry, but it becomes a subject for mirth under Titmarsh's ready pen or pencil, (for Michael Angelo is an artist himself, and a right clever one, and needs no Cruikshank or Leech to illustrate him.) But Thackeray never sets about a story of any length without having a will and a purpose. And this indeed is a noticeable difference generally existing between the wit and the humorist, that while the former sparkles away without any object beyond his own momentary amusement, the latter has definite aim, some abuse to attack, some moral to hint. Thackeray attacks abuses, and it is with an honest indignation and simple earnestness that form the distinguishing features of his serious writings. He assaults all manner of social sham, humbug and flunkeyism, and gives it to them in a way that does you good to hear. Against toadyism, affectation and snobbery, he preaches a crusade in the sturdiest Anglo-Saxon. The charge began in the "Snobs of England;" it is now followed up in "Vanity Fair." Any one, therefore, who reads the latter book should read the "Snob Papers" in Punch, by way of introduction to it. Tin-



worship and title-worship, and that "praise of men" which your fashionables love more than the "praise of God" — Titmarsh is sworn foe to all these, and wages unrelenting war on them — but with none of that cant which runs all through Jerrold and half through Dickens: he does not make all his poor people angels, nor all his rich people devils, because they are rich. Nor has he any marked prejudice against Christianity in general, or the Christianity of his own church in particular — which we are weak enough to think rather to his credit. Moreover his sledge-hammer invective against fashionable fooleries, is not engendered of or alloyed with any rusticity or inability to appreciate the refinements of civilized life, as a backwoodsman or Down-easter might abuse things he did not comprehend; for Titmarsh has a soul for art and poetry, and good living, and all that is æsthetic and elegant.

"Vanity Fair," then, is a satire on English society. The scene indeed is laid thirty years back, but that is of a piece with Juvenal's

"Experiar quid concedatur in illos  
Quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis atque Latina."

It is meant for the present time, as the very illustrations show, in which all the male characters wear the convenient trouser (*Americanicè* pantaloons) of our own day, instead of the stiff "tights" which were the habit of that period. In a work of this sort we naturally expect to find many *type-characters* — that is, characters who represent classes of people. Most of these are very good and true. Rawley Crawdon is a capital representative of the uneducated part of the young British officery — profligate and spendthrift, stupid in everything but cards, billiards, and horseflesh, and too illiterate to spell decently; yet withal bold as a lion. It is pleasant to see such a man properly depicted now and then, for the writer who does it is doing his duty to civilization by assailing the old barbarous feudal notion that mere physical courage, which is generally founded on the consciousness of superior physical strength and dexterity, should ride roughshod over moral courage and intellect. And Lord Steyne is a thorough specimen of the aristocratic old Sybarite. Others had tried their hands at this



character before — D'Israeli and that coarsest of fine ladies, Lady Blessington — but none of them have succeeded like Thackeray. And Pitt Crawley is a perfect model of the stiff, slow, respectable *formula* man. And Osborne, Sr., is one of your regular purse-proud cits who measure everything by what it will fetch on 'Change. But some of the portraits are not fair even to *Vanity Fair*, and that of Sir Pitt, the elder Crawley, seems to us positively unjust. He may be a true sketch from life; rumor has indeed given him a real name and family; but he is too bad to be a type of country baronets, or even of country squires. And though the high-life characters have bitter justice done them in most things, there is one point on which the men are a little wronged: *they swear too much*. Allowing that a fearful amount of profanity prevails among people who ought to know better, there is surely no necessity for its being repeated. We do not want to hear the thing simply because it is true, any more than we wish to see pictures of disgusting and frightful objects, however faithfully to nature they may be painted. But in fact English gentlemen are not so openly profane as Titmarsh represents them.

The book has no hero: it openly professes to have none. But there is a heroine, at least a prominent female character, and she is equal to a dozen ordinary heroines and heroes. Becky Sharpe is an original creation, not the representative of a class, though there are traits about her that remind you of several classes. Any one who has been much in society must have had the fortune or misfortune to meet more than one woman who resembled Becky in some points — ay, even among us simple, unsophisticated, etc., republicans; for in truth if you only leave out a little nonsense about titles, everything in Titmarsh's literary puppet-show will apply point-blank to our own occidental *Vanity Fair*. There are women as spitefully satirical as Rebecca, making mischief in the most ingenious and graceful ways — fashionable enough that, and not by any means a sin, but on the contrary no small recommendation in *Vanity Fair*. There are women all in the best society, who flirt with every passable man that comes near them, as Rebecca did; for observe, it is not proved that Mrs. Rawdon Crawley did anything more; her biographer does not give you to



understand that she actually "committed herself" with any one — and this is very proper and pleasing in Vanity Fair. There are women who, like Rebecca, have always a plausible lie ready to excuse themselves; and this is an excusable peccadillo in Vanity Fair. There are women who, like Rebecca, look to marriage only as a means of getting a position "in society," and what can be a more flattering homage to Vanity Fair? There are women, like Rebecca, who sponge upon spooneys and get money under false pretences; and the victims may "cut up rough" about it, but the rest of Vanity Fair pass it over as a venial offence and accept their part of the spoil. In short, put together a number of things the practice of which is not only allowable but successful in Vanity Fair, and what a devil of a woman you will make! Such at least is our idea of the *moral* and theory of Rebecca Crawley *née* Sharpe.

She is the daughter of a dissipated artist and a French *danseuse*, is brought up for a governess, has no principles worth speaking of, but plenty of accomplishments and much wordly cleverness. Hardly out of school, she makes beautiful play for the first man she meets, a dummy fat dandy, and thus Titmarsh defends her: —

"It was an advance, and as such, perhaps, some ladies of indisputable correctness and gentility will condemn the action as immodest but, you see, poor dear Rebecca had all this work to do for herself. If a person is too poor to keep a servant, he must sweep his own rooms: if a dear girl has no dear mamma to settle matters with the young man, she must do it for herself. And oh! what a mercy it is that these women do not exercise their powers oftener! We can't resist them if they do. Let them show ever so little inclination, and men go down on their knees at once; old or ugly, it is all the same. And this I set down as a positive truth. A woman with fair opportunities and without an absolute hump, may marry WHOM SHE LIKES. Only let us be thankful that the darlings are like the beasts of the field [Oh! Oh!] and don't know their own power. They would overcome us entirely if they did."

We have known young ladies of the same opinion — that a woman may marry any man she likes — and some of them have been wofully sold in consequence, and remained utterly unmarried to the end of time. But if we are content not to state the proposition in extreme terms, we may make it sufficiently broad. The chances



of a woman getting the man she wants, are to those of a man getting the woman he wants, as nineteen to one on a very moderate estimate. Where the man is the attacking party, how easily all his approaches are seen through! how they are turned to derision before his very face! And if he is really, truly, and hopelessly in love, it is a thousand times worse. Then, when it is of vital importance to him to make the best appearance, he is sure to be bungling and stupid, and not able to do himself justice. On the other hand, it is a beautiful sight, as a mere work of art, to see a man skillfully angled for, (for man before matrimony is like to a fish which is inveigled with rod and line: after the operation he resembleth the horse who is ridden with bit and *bridle*.) It is immensely tickling to the victim himself, and vast fun to the *circumstances* — such of them, that is, as have not similar designs on the sufferer. And so, by rule, Becky ought to captivate Joseph Sedley off-hand; but that would have wound up the history too soon; so the portly exquisite is carried away from her by the lover of her particular friend, whom she afterwards pays off handsomely for the kind turn done her. Spilt milk and lost lovers are not to be cried over; so the little woman dries her tears and makes another shy — this time successfully — at the dashing, fighting, stupid young officer, Rawdon Crawley, with his expensive tastes and limited means. But Mr. and Mrs. R. C. being people of family (he is and she professes to be) must live accordingly, and so we are let into the mystery “how to live well on nothing a-year.”

“I suppose there is no man in this vanity fair of ours, so little observant as not to think sometimes about the worldly affairs of his acquaintances, or so extremely charitable as not to wonder how his neighbour Jones or his neighbour Smith can make both ends meet at the end of the year. \* \* \* Some three or four years after his stay in Paris, when Rawdon Crawley and his wife were established in a very small comfortable house in Curyon street, Mayfair, there was scarcely one of the numerous friends they entertained at dinner that did not ask the above question regarding them. As I am in a situation to be able to tell the public how Crawley and his wife lived without any income, may I entreat the public newspapers which are in the habit of extracting various portions of the periodical works now published, not to reprint the following exact narrative and cal-



culations, of which I ought, as the discoverer, (and at some expense too,) to have the benefit. My son — I would say, were I blessed with a child — you may by deep inquiry and constant intercourse with him, learn how a man lives comfortably on nothing a-year. But it is best not to be intimate with gentlemen of this profession, and to take the calculations at second hand, as you do logarithms, for to work them yourself, depend upon it, will cost you something considerable. \* \* \* \* The truth is, when we say of a gentleman that he lives elegantly on nothing a-year, we use the word 'nothing' to signify something unknown; meaning, simply, that we don't know how the gentleman in question defrays the expenses of his establishment. Now our friend the Colonel had a great aptitude for all games of chance; and exercising himself, as he continually did, with the cards, the dice-box or the cue, it is natural to suppose that he attained a much greater skill in the use of these articles than men can possess who only occasionally handle them. To use a cue at billiards well, is like using a pencil or a smallsword — you cannot master any one of these implements at first, and it is only by repeated study and perseverance, joined to a natural taste, that a man can excel in the handling of either. Now Crawley, from being only a brilliant amateur, had grown to be a consummate master of billiards. Like a great general, his genius used to rise with the danger, and when the luck had been unfavorable to him for a whole game, and the bets were consequently against him, he would, with consummate skill and boldness, make some prodigious hits which would restore the battle, and come in a victor at the end, to the astonishment of everybody — of everybody, that is, who was a stranger to his play. Those who were accustomed to see it, were cautious how they staked their money against a man of such sudden resources, and brilliant and overpowering skill. At games of cards he was equally skilful, for though he would constantly lose money at the commencement of an evening, playing so carelessly and making such blunders that new-comers were often inclined to think meanly of his talent; yet when roused to action, and awakened to caution by repeated losses, it was remarked that Crawley's play became quite different, and that he was pretty sure of beating his enemy before the night was over. Indeed very few men could say that they ever had the better of him."

And, of course, if anybody hinted that the Colonel's play was too good to be true, he had his pistols ready, "same which he shot Captain Marker," to vindicate his honor. Are there any nice young men in Yankee land who live upon nothing in the same way? We don't pretend to know, and only ask for information.



But clever as Rebecca and her husband are in this way, they can't get much from his elder brother, the formula before alluded to, one of those people who know just enough to hold on to what they have got, which, to be sure, requires some capacity.

"Pitt knew how poor his brother and his brother's family must be. It could not have escaped the notice of such a cool and experienced old diplomatist, that Rawdon's family had nothing to live upon, and that houses and carriages are not to be kept for nothing. He knew very well that he was the proprietor or appropriator of the money which, according to all proper calculation, ought to have fallen to his younger brother, and he had, we may be sure, some secret pangs of remorse within him, which warned him that he ought to perform some act of justice, or let us say, compensation, towards these disappointed relations. A just, decent man, not without brains, who said his prayers and knew his catechism, and did his duty outwardly through life, he could not be otherwise than aware that something was due to his brother at his hands, and that morally he was Rawdon's creditor. But as one reads in the *Times*, every now and then, queer announcements from the Chancellor of the Exchequer acknowledging the receipt of £ 50 from A. B., or £ 10 from W. T., as conscience-money, on account of taxes due by the said A. B. or W. T., which payments the penitents beg the Right Honorable gentleman to acknowledge through the medium of the public press — so is the Chancellor, no doubt, and the reader likewise, always perfectly sure that the above-named A. B. and W. T. are only paying up a very small instalment of what they really owe, and that the man who sends up a twenty pound note has very likely hundreds or thousands more for which he ought to account. Such, at least, are my feelings, when I see A. B. or W. T.'s insufficient acts of repentance. And I have no doubt that Pitt Crawley's contrition, or kindness, if you will, towards his younger brother, by whom he had so much profited, was only a very small dividend upon the capital sum for which he was indebted to Rawdon. Not everybody is willing to pay even so much. To part with money is a sacrifice beyond almost all men endowed with a sense or order. \* \* \* \* So, in a word, Pitt Crawley thought he would do something for his brother, and then thought he would think about it some other time."

It is a good old maxim of Vanity Fair that Sir Pitt went upon, "Every one for himself, and God for us all." Some rich men have a habit of doing nothing for their poor relations, and then wanting to know if they are satisfied; others do a little, and talk enough about that to make up for the deficiency — if talk would



do it. All this goes off in England very quietly, as being the natural course of things in a country where the eldest son legally succeeds to all the property, and the younger children are more or less starved. Here it is not so common, for if a *millionaire* does not divide his property equally, the law, or the lawyers generally, contrive to do it for him, and make a partition among all the family alike, however worthless or extravagant some of them may be, the beautiful consequence of which is, that three generations never occupy the same house, and it is impossible to preserve, much less increase, any private collection of paintings, books, or curiosities. We brag of our equal law of succession, but in some things it certainly stands in the way of civilization and refinement.

But though Rebecca is not able to bleed her diplomatic brother-in-law, she gets the needful from a much greater man — Lord Steyne. To be sure his morals are not of the best, "but," as little Lord Southdown says, "he's got the best dry Sillery in Europe." A right Vanity Fair apology that! It's none of my business if this man is a profligate and a villain, so long as it doesn't hurt me. He is to be damned on his own account; meanwhile why shouldn't I have the benefit of his good things as well as any one else? For, as Titmarsh says in another place, "wine, wax-lights, comestibles, crinoline-petticoats, diamonds, Louis-Quatorze gimcracks and old china, and splendid high-stepping carriage horses — all the delights of life, I say — would go to the deuce if people did but act upon their silly principles, and avoid those whom they dislike and abuse. Whereas, by a little charity and mutual forbearance, things are made to go on pleasantly enough: we may abuse a man as much as we like, and call him the greatest rascal unhung — but do we wish to hang him therefore? No, we shake hands when we meet. If his cook is good, we go and dine with him." On which accommodating principle, whenever Lord Steyne had an entertainment, "everybody went to wait upon this great man — everybody who was asked: as you the reader, (do not say nay,) or I the writer hereof, would go, if we had an invitation."

No, Mr. Titmarsh, there are people who wouldn't go at any price — people to whom you don't do full justice — your Lady Southdowns and the like — "serious



people," as they are denominated on your side of the water, and "professors of religion" on ours. And because these people — having their mental optics illumined by light from above — see through the hollowness and humbug and wretched unsatisfactoriness of the things of Vanity Fair, and value them accordingly, and do act upon their (not altogether silly) principles, and don't sell them for dry Sillery, or fine music, or pretty women, or any such amusing vanities — are they to be rewarded for this by being held up to ridicule? Verily they deserve better usage from your pen and pencil. Is there any philosophy or morality or wisdom, except practical Christianity, that will enable man or woman to fight Vanity Fair and come off conqueror? And if not, why do you, who preach so earnestly against Vanity Fair, sneer down Christian men and women?

Titmarsh would answer probably that he did not, by any means, intend to laugh at religion, but a counterfeits or perverted developments of religion — the mock-righteousness of some who are not righteous at all; the want of judgment of others who are righteous overmuch. And were he, or any friend of his, to advance this defence of him, we should be charitably pre-disposed to accept it, for there are passages in this book which none but a true Christian could have written — at least it seems so to us. Here are two taken at random. A poor widow is about to part from her child, whom she has not the means of supporting: —

"That night Amelia made the boy read the sory of Samuel to her, and how Hannah, his mother, having weaned him, brought him to Eli, the High Priest, to minister before the Lord. And he read the song of gratitude which Hannah sang; and which says, Who is it that maketh poor and maketh rich, and bringeth low and exalteth? how the poor shall be raised up out of the dust, and how in his own might no man shall be strong. Then he read how Samuel's mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up to offer the yearly sacrifice. And then, in her sweet simple way, George's mother made commentaries to the boy upon this affecting story. How Hannah, though she loved her son so much, gave him up because of her vow; and how she must always have thought of him, as she sat at home, far away, making the little coat; and Samuel, she was sure, never forgot his mother; and how happy she must have been as the time came (and the years



pass away very quick) when she should see her boy, and how good and wise he had grown."

The same widow's old bankrupt father dies.

"Emmy stayed and did her duty as usual. She was bowed down by no especial grief, and rather solemn than sorrowful. She prayed that her own end might be as calm and painless, and thought with trust and reverence of the words she had heard from her father during his illness, indicative of his faith, his resignation, and his future hope.

"Yes, I think that will be the better ending of the two after all. Suppose you are particularly rich and well to do, and say on that last day, 'I am very rich; I am tolerably well known; I have lived all my life in the best society, and, thank Heaven, come of a most respectable family. I have served my king and my country with honor. I was in Parliament for several years, where, I may say, my speeches were listened to, and pretty well received. I don't owe any man a shilling; on the contrary, I lent my old college friend Jack Lazarus fifty pounds, for which my executors will not press him. I leave my daughters with ten thousand pounds a-piece — very good portions for girls. I bequeath my plate and furniture, my house in Baker street, with a handsome jointure, to my widow for her life; and my landed property, besides money in the funds, and my cellar of well-selected wine, to my son. I leave twenty pound a-year to my valet; and I defy any man after I am gone to say anything against my character.' Or suppose, on the other hand, your swan sings quite a different sort of dirge, and you say, 'I am a poor, blighted, disappointed old fellow, and have made an utter failure through life. I was not endowed either with brains or with good fortune, and confess that I have committed a hundred mistakes and blunders, I own to having forgotten my duty many a time. I can't pay what I owe. On my last bed I lie utterly helpless and humble; and I pray forgiveness for my weakness and throw myself with a contrite heart at the feet of the Divine mercy.' Which of these two speeches, think you, would be the best oration for your own funeral? old Sedley made the last; and in that humble frame of mind, and holding by the hand of his daughter, life and disappointment and vanity sank away from under him."

After reading such paragraphs as these, we feel bound to believe that it is mere *εἰρωνεία* when Titmarsh says he would accept any great bad man's invitation. We don't believe that he would have dined with the Marquis of Hereford's mistress, as Croker *alias* Rigby used to do after slanging the immoral French novelists



in that bulwark of orthodox principles, the London Quarterly.

But to return to the amiable Becky. Under the patronage of the old roué whom she contrives to entice and wheedle without doing anything to compromise herself, she actually obtains a footing in "the very best society."

"Her success excited, elated, and then bored her. At first no occupation was more pleasant than to invent and procure (the latter a work of no small trouble and ingenuity by the way, in a person of Mrs. Rawdon Crawley's very narrow means,) to procure, we say, the prettiest new dresses and ornaments; to drive to the fine dinner parties, where she was welcomed by great people; and from the fine dinner parties to fine assemblies, whither the same people came with whom she had been dining, whom she had met the night before, and would see on the morrow — the young men faultlessly appointed, and handsomely cravatted, with the neatest glossy boots and white gloves — the elders portly, brassbuttoned, noble looking, polite and prosy — the young ladies blonde, timid, and in pink — the mothers grand, beautiful, sumptuous, solemn, and in diamonds. They talked in English, not in bad French, as they do in the novels. They talked about each other's houses, and characters, and families; just as the Joneses do about the Smiths. Becky's former acquaintances hated and envied her; the poor woman herself was yawning in spirit. 'I wish I were out of it,' she said to herself. 'I would rather be a parson's wife and teach a Sunday-school than this; or a sergeant's lady and ride in the regimental waggon; or O, how much gayer it would be to wear spangles and trowsers, and dance before a booth at a fair.'"

Not being at all in the diplomatic way and very little in the fashionable way, we have had small personal experience of "the very best" English society — the Almacks and Morning Post people to wit. So far as we did see any of it, we thought it marvellously slow, and by no means distinguished for taste, a great deal of solid material and resources badly developed, beautiful diamonds on ugly dowagers, ugly dresses on handsome belles — for, *régle générale*, all the English women dress badly. In the easy, natural, frock-coat-and-no-straps part of life, honest Bull shines out; but in all matters



of fashionable elegance, he is nowhere in comparison with his neighbor Crapeau — nay, can hardly hold a candle to his young brother Jonathan whom he sometimes affects to despise as a semibarbarian. By the way, what a chapter or two an American Titmarsh might make of our “upper ten thousand!” the handsome little silly girls just from boarding-school; the little — men they call themselves — equally silly but not equally handsome, just from boarding-school too, only it is called a university; here and there a juvenile lion who has brought the last variety of vests and vices from dear, delightful, dissipated Paris — or perchance a real Parisian, baron or marquis, sent by subscription of a club with three changes of linen, to marry an heiress if he can get one — not forgetting the four great facts of a Gothamite ball, champagne, oysters, charlotte-russe and polka. We wonder how the Bostonese do these things. The *sûveroi* say that they have metaphysical cotillons at the modern Athens, and discuss Wordsworth amid the mazes of *la Trénis*. Awful and stunning idea!

Rebecca is apt to be bored, as all people who live merely to amuse and gratify themselves are. If she finds town-society stupid, she is not more pleased with ruralizing at her brother-in-law's.

“‘Tt isn't difficult to be a country gentleman's wife,’ Rebecca thought. ‘I think I could be a good woman if I had five thousand a-year. I could dawdle about in the nursery and count the apricots on the wall. I could water plants in a green-house and pick off dead leaves from the geraniums. I could ask old women about their rheumatisms, and order half-a-crown's worth of soup for the poor. I shouldn't miss it much out of five thousand a-year. I could even drive ten miles to dine at a neighbor's, and dress in the fashions of the year before last. I could go to church and keep awake in the great family pew, or go to sleep behind the curtain with my veil down, if I only had practice. I could pay everybody if I had but the money. That is what the conjurers here pride themselves on doing.’”

And yet there is much enjoyment in the life of a country-gentleman's wife, or a country gentleman in England or America; but it is enjoyment only for those who like simple and natural pleasures — and Becky did not like simple pleasures. She disliked children, as we have mentioned. A terrible trait that even in man —



unless, like William Pitt, he is a great statesman at twenty-one, and has to defend his country against the world, when he may be excused from possessing any of the domestic affections in consideration of the work he has to do. The man who, *having leisure to love children*, hates them — that man we would not trust with our purse, our secrets, our character, our life. But how much worse in a woman!

It would take too long to follow Becky through her chequered career — her grand catastrophe, her exile, her ultimate partial recovery. Many of our readers were more or less familiar with her before seeing these remarks of ours; and such as are not, must have been tempted ere this to resolve that they will go to the fountain-head for information about her. We have only to observe, before taking leave of her, the skill which her biographer displays in lightly passing over some of the diabolical scenes she is concerned in, such for instance as "her second appearance in the character of Clytemnestra." Your true artist will produce infinitely more effect by just hinting at a horror, than a second-rate man can work by going into the most elaborate details.\*

Some notice should be taken of the Osbornes and Sedleys who make up the underplot of the story. We have some suspicion that Thackeray finished up old Osborne, the purse-proud merchant, more carefully than he had intended at first, in opposition to Mr. Dombey, to show *his* view of such a character in opposition to that of Dickens. If such a comparison is challenged, there can be no doubt that so far as verisimilitude and nature are concerned, Mr. Osborne, Sr., has it by long

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\* We noticed a remarkable instance of this ten years ago. No one who has read *Oliver Twist* can forget the tremendous power with which the last scenes in the life of the miserable old Jew, Fagan, are worked out; but of the very last scene of all — of his actual execution — there is not a word. Contemporary with *Oliver Twist*, appeared an Irish story by one of the Irish novelists, which terminated with the execution of the principal villain. Every attendant circumstance was minutely worked out, and "the agony piled up" uncommonly high; but after all the thought struck us immediately, "How much less impression is made by all these terrifying minutiae than by the half dozen lines in which Boz informs us that Mr. Brownlow and Oliver, in coming out of Newgate, saw the sheriff's preparations for the day's tragedy."



odds. There never was such a merchant or man of business at all as Mr. Dombey. His calm, icy pride is not the pride of a merchant at all; it would be in character for a nobleman or a gentleman of old family. We wonder Dickens did not make him one or the other. There was nothing in the exigencies of the story to forbid it. Noblemen are ruined easily enough now-a-days — witness the Duke of Buckingham, who has just been sold out as completely as the veriest Wall-street speculator, to the great joy of all radicals. Nor is Mr. D. let down and made to relent in a natural, gradual and plausible way, as Mr. O. is; but taken off the stage as melo-dramatically as he was brought on.

The loves and fortunes of young Osborne and Amelia Sedley, are designed to carry out still further the attack on what formed one of the strongest topics of denunciation in the "Snob Papers," — that heartless system (flourishing to perfection in France, but deep-rooted enough in England) which considers matrimony as the union, not of a young man to a young woman, but of *so much to so much*. A splendid theme for indignant declamation, and one in which the satirist is sure to meet with much sympathy from the young of both sexes. But we must remember that the principle of union for love has, like all principles, its limitations. That two young people, long and fondly attached to each other, should be afraid to marry because they would be obliged to drop a little in the social scale, and deny themselves some of the outward luxuries they enjoy separately; that they should sacrifice their hearts to those abominable dictates of fashion which Titmarsh has summed up in his Snob Commandment, "Thou shalt not marry unless thou hast a Brougham and a man-servant;" this is truly matter of indignation and mourning, against which it is not possible to say too much. But we must also protest against the opposite extreme — the inference drawn from an extension of our principle — that love ought to overcome and exclude *all* objections, want of principles and character in the man for instance; or utter want of means on both sides to support a family; or even — what is generally the first thing to be disregarded in such cases — incompatibility of relations and friends. Sentimentalists talk as if love were to be the substitute for, or at least the



equal of religion, (it is the only religion of the French writers,) whereas, in truth, it is no more infallible in its decisions or imperative in its claims than ambition, or courage, or benevolence, or various other passions, which, either indifferent or positively laudable in themselves, are liable to sad perversion and exaggeration. The lover makes great sacrifices for his mistress; so does the ambitious man for his ambition; the covetous man for his fortune; and, to take a passion wholly and unmitigatedly bad, the vindictive man for his revenge. In all these cases the sacrifices are made for the same end — the securing of a desired object for self; but because, in the first case, the object of desire is not the possession of a mere abstraction like fame, or of a mere material like money, but of another human being, therefore love has the *appearance* of being the most disinterested and self-sacrificing of the passions, while it is, in reality, generally the most selfish. Is this view a soulless and worldly one? We appeal to your own experience, reader. Of all the *pur sang* love-matches you have known — matches where one or more of the impediments we have mentioned existed — how many have turned out happily? Nay, we appeal to Titmarsh himself and *his own characters in this very book*. Would it not have been a thousand times better for Amelia if she had married Dobbin in the first place? And might not George as well have taken Miss Schwartz as wed Amelia one month and been ready to run away with another woman the next? \*

We must take leave of Titmarsh; for he is carrying us off into all sorts of digressions. We never were so long filling the same number of pages as we have been on the present occasion, for whenever we opened the book to make an extract we were tempted to read on, on, on — the same things which we had read a dozen times — but there was no resisting. And when we re-

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\* This is an element that never enters into the sentimentalist's calculation — if sentimentalists ever make calculations — the inconstancy of love. Could the continuance of a first passion be insured, there would be more excuse for putting it above prudence, and duty, and filial affection; but alas! it often vanishes in what D'Israeli not unfeelingly calls "a crash of iconoclastic surfeit," and then, when that, for which everything was given up, becomes itself nothing, the reaction is awful.



olutely turned our back to his people, it was only to think, and reason, and argue about them. How many of the hundreds of novels, published every year, leave any impression on your mind or give you one afterthought about any character in them? It is easy to take exceptions to the book — we have taken our share; we might go on to pick out little slips, instances of forgetfulness, as where we are told first that Amelia Sedley is not the heroine, and two or three pages after that she is; or when the climate of Coventry Island is so bad that no office will insure Rawdon's life there, yet in the very same number it is mentioned how much his life-insurance cost him. But, say what you will, the book draws you back to it, over and over again. Farewell then, O Titmarsh! Truly, thou deservest better treatment than we can give thee. Thy book should be written about in a natural, even, continuous, flowing style like thine own, not in our lumbering paragraphs, that blunder out only half of what we mean to say. And do thou, O reader, buy this book if thou hast not bought it; if thou hast, throw it not away into the chiffonier-basket as thou dost many brown-paper-covered volumes; but put it into a good binding and lay it by — not among the works "that no gentleman's library should be without" — but somewhere easy of access; for it is a book to keep and read, and there are many sermons in it.

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## OXFORD HEXAMETERS.

Literary World, June 1849.

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### *The Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich, a Long-Vacation Pastoral.*

By Arthur Hugh Clough. Cambridge: John Bartlett. 1849.

THIS little book has been a puzzle to some of our Republican readers who are principled against Fraser. For as Mr. Bartlett has given no intimation whatever on the title-page that there was any such thing as an original English edition, they, seeing a book published



at Cambridge, Mass., and composed in manyfooted lines, that run over like too copiously filled glasses (extra water will produce the fulness as well as extra spirit), thought that it must be some progeny of *Evangeline*, either in the way of imitation or quiz. Whereas it has about as much to do with *Evangeline* as with Southey's Vision of Judgment. The English have been writing English Hexameters (and Pentameters too, by the way) for several years. We remember at least two partial translations of the Iliad, by different hands, and a number of poems, original and translated, the joint composition of three distinguished University men, Archdeacon Hare, Dr. Whewell, and (we believe) Professor Long. Indeed, there were plenty of Hexametrists before Longfellow (we speak of the present generation, without going back to Southey, much less to Sidney), but they are not often heard of on this side the water, because they want a sacred Bostonian.

English Hexameters have generally one of two faults. Either a uniformity of structure that gives them a monotony of cadence, or a carelessness of structure that leaves them no cadence at all. The former is the prevailing error of *Evangeline*. Every line in it is the exact rhythmical and metrical counterpart of almost every other line. There is no variety of cæsura or movement throughout the whole poem, and the monotony of the versification reminds us of a machine, invented in England a few years ago, which *ground out* hexameters to any extent, on the principle of the kaleidoscope somehow, and all after this pattern,

*Murmura torva tubæ percellunt pectora dura,*

every line containing four neuter-plurals, a Mollossus of a verb,\* and an Iambic genitive. "The Bothie of what do you call it," has the opposite and worse fault of using so many variations and licenses, that the majority of the lines which it contains are no hexameters at all, and can only be admitted as apologies for such by a stretch of charity rather than of courtesy. The author benevolently warns us, that every kind of irregularity

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\* By this formidable expression the writer appears to mean a verb of three long syllables. — *Printer's D.*



must be expected, and that "Spondaic lines are almost the rule;" unfortunately most of these "Spondaic lines" are rather *Trochaic* lines, *e. g.* the second in the volume.

"Long had the stone been put, tree cast, and thrown the hammer."

And by way of compensation for occasionally falling short a few syllables, they now and then run over a good many, till they almost equal the notorious Alexandrine of the Scotch versifier: —

"And was not Pharaoh a saucy rascal,  
Who would not let the Children of Israel, their wives and their  
little ones, their flocks and their herds, and everything  
they had, go out into the wilderness for seven days to  
eat the Paschal?"

The plot of "The Bothie" is the merest thread. Six Oxford men go out on a *Reading party*. *Reading*, in the University slang, means *studying*, and the reading parties are so called, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, because the party do anything but read. The veritable students stay at the University, while the "parties" betake them to quiet little places (such as the Island of Jersey, for instance), where the wine is cheap and the women handsome, and the climate pleasantly enervating, and "the contingent advantages generally remarkable," as Dick Swiveller says — it may be judged how much *reading* they accomplish. Our party go to the Highlands, bathe chiefly, and one of them falls in love, and is ultimately married to a mountain lassie: his amatory proceedings are made the medium of introducing more Carlyle and Tennyson run mad than we have seen for many a day. However, not wishing to prejudice the reader, we shall give him a few extracts to judge for himself; and they shall be given in accordance with the more fashionable than just rule of picking out the best bits we can find: —

#### THE USE OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS OF CLERGYMEN.

"Here too were Catholic Priest and Established Minister standing,  
One to say grace before, the other after the dinner;  
Catholic Priest; for many still cling to the Ancient Worship,  
And Sir Hector's father himself had built them a chapel;  
So stood Priest and Minister, near to each other, but silent,  
One to say grace before, the other after the dinner."



A touching picture of concord this: it reminds us of a venerable and lamented friend, who used to give little soirées to all the *ists* and *ories* in the city, from Hughes to Bellows inclusive — and the interference of the Police was not found necessary on a single occasion: —

WHAT THE "READING PARTY" DID WITH THEIR BOOKS.

"Lo the weather is golden, the weather-glass, say they, rising;  
Four weeks here have we read; four weeks will we read hereafter;  
Three weeks hence will return and revisit our dismal classics,  
Three weeks hence readjust our visions of classes and classics.  
Fare ye well, meantime, forgotten, unnamed, undreamt of,  
History, Science, and Poets: lo, deep in dustiest cupboard  
Thookydid, Oloros' son, Halimoosian, here lieth buried.\*  
Slumber in Liddell-and-Scott, O musical chaff\*\* of Old Athens,  
Dishes and fishes, bird, beast, and Sesquipedalian blackguard!  
Sleep, weary Ghosts, be at peace, and abide in your lexicon-limbo,  
Sleep, as in lava for ages your Herculean kindred,  
Æschylus, Sophocles, Homer, Herodotus, Pindar, and Plato."

QUANDARY OF AN "EARNEST MAN," AFTER THE MANNER OF CARLYLE.

"I am sorry to say, your Providence puzzles me sadly;  
Children of circumstance are we to be? You answer, oh, no wise!  
Where does Circumstance end, and Providence where begins it?  
In the revolving sphere which is upper, which is under?  
What are we to resist, and what are we to be friends with?  
If there is battle, 'tis battle by night: I stand in the darkness,  
Here in the mêlée of men Ionian and Dorian on both sides,  
Signal and pass-word known; which is friend and which is foeman?  
Is it a friend? I doubt, though he speak with the voice of a brother.  
Still you are right, I suppose; you always are and will be.  
Though I mistrust the Field-Marshal, I bow to the duty of order.  
Let us all get on as we can, and do what we're meant for,  
Or, as is said in your favorite weary old Ethics, our *ergon*.  
Yet is my feeling rather to ask, where is the battle?"

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Neither battle I see nor arraying, nor King in Israel,  
Only infinite jumble and mess and dislocation,  
Backed by a solemn appeal 'for God's sake do not stir there.'"

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\* A literal translation of the pseudo-epitaph of Thucydides.

\*\* *Chaff* is fast-man for *banter*.



**METAPHYSIC MUSINGS AND LOVE-LONGINGS OF A POETIC YOUNG  
RADICAL.**

"Souls of the dead, one fancies, can enter, and be with the living,  
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her!  
Spirits escaped from the body can enter and be with the living,  
Entering unseen, and reliving unquestioned, they bring do they  
feel, too?

Joy, pure joy, as they mingle and mix inner essence with essence!  
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her!  
Joy, pure joy, bringing with them, and when they retire leaving after  
No cruel shame, no prostration, despondency, memories rather,  
Sweet, happy hopes bequeathing, Ah! wherefore not thus with the  
living?

Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her;  
Is it impossible, say you, these passionate fervent impulsions,  
These projections of spirit to spirit, these inward embraces,  
Should in strange ways, in her dreams should visit her, strengthen  
her, shield her?

Is it possible rather that these great floods of feeling  
Setting in daily from me towards her, should impotent wholly  
Bring neither sound nor motion, to that sweet shore they heave to?  
Efflux here, and there no stir nor pulse of influx!

It must reverberate surely, reverberate idly, it may be.

Yea, hath He set us bounds which we shall not pass, and cannot?  
Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I could go and uphold her;  
Surely, surely, when sleepless I lie in the mountain lamenting,  
Surely, surely, she hears in her dreams a voice 'I am with thee!  
Saying 'although not with thee; behold, for we mated our spirits  
Then, when we stood in the chamber, and knew not the words we  
were saying,'

Yea, if she felt me within her, when not with one finger I touched her,  
Surely she knows it, and feels it, while, sorrowing here in the  
moorland,

Would I were dead, I keep saying, that so I might go and uphold her!"  
And hereabouts we fell into a doze, and dreamed that  
a friend asked us what we had been reading, and we  
told him the Bother of toping no Physick, and he said  
he thought the title a very strange one and not at all  
true, for it was the Bother of toping Physick that had  
disgusted him with the old school and made him a  
Some-thing-or-other-path, and then we woke up in the  
act of writing a dreary essay on English Hexameters,  
which would infallibly have put our public to sleep, but  
we shall be merciful, and only inflict on them this stray  
scrap of it.



English lines *that will do duty for Hexameters* are the easiest things possible to write — easier than any kind of rhyme. *Real* English Hexameters are harder to write than real Blank Verse, and *à fortiori* harder than any kind of rhyme. Even these are chiefly valuable as *tours de force*. Sir Philip Sidney wrote Hexameters in his day, so did Southey in his, so do Hare, Whewell, Longfellow, Clough, *cum multis aliis*, at the present time; but the metre is never likely to be popular. We say this not on account of any particular unfitness in the Hexameter for the purposes of modern *versification*, so much as on the general principle that *exotic* metres cannot be successfully introduced into a language already supplied with measures of verse. A strong instance of this is afforded by the German Trochaic Stanza of Five-Trochee lines, with Catalectic lines alternating. No one ever read “The Gods of Greece” or “The Bride of Corinth” in the original without being struck with the beauty and grandeur of this metre, yet we will wager that no one prefers Bulwer’s translation of the latter poem to Anstey’s. Nor has Aytoun’s original poem in the same stanza (Hermotinus), though published in Blackwood with a particular description of an eulogy on the measure prefixed, found many admirers or imitators in ten years, and the author has not been tempted to repeat the experiment.

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## NEW YORK SOCIETY AND THE WRITERS THEREON.

Literary World, 1850.

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1. *Earning a Living*. A Comedy in Five Acts. By a Citizen of New York. New York. 1849.
2. *Revue du Nouveau Monde*. Publiée les 1er et 15 de chaque mois. Par Régis de Trobriand.
3. *The Lorgnette; or, Studies of the Town*. By an Opera Goer (weekly). Henry Kernot, New York.

SOME fifteen months ago the *American Review* threw out a hint of the ample field afforded to the satirist in



New York fashionable society, and expressed some surprise that the subject seemed to be left by tacit consent of competent parties, in the hands of Mr. Willis. The field is now, it seems, to be worked in earnest, for the first time (with the above-mentioned exception) since the days of *Salmagundi*; and we are very glad of it. The observations of educated and refined men upon society and manners are not only amusing in a merely literary point of view, they are of great value to the future historian, and of present importance in representing the country correctly to the eyes of foreigners. One reason why English editors so often take their ideas of American city life from the *New York Sewer*, and other equally absurd sources, is because American gentlemen have written so little on this topic. The sketches of Mr. Willis, racy and amusing as they usually are, do not supply our desideratum.

After all, much remains to be said on the subject. Thus far our writers have aimed rather at exposing follies than at throwing out any hint of remedies for them. This is a necessary first step, but *only* the first step. It is very possible that in endeavoring to amend or supply the deductions or want of deductions of these writers, we shall only mar their lucid statement of the premises; still the spirit moves us so strongly to say something, that we must even take our chance. And what we have to say, be it premised out of respect to our friends at a distance, will have reference particularly and solely (unless where otherwise distinctly specified) to *New York* society, not merely because our Gotham is in some senses, and most certainly in a fashionable sense, the metropolis of the Union, but because to discriminate the differences and shades of fashionable life in our several cities, would require more personal observation than we have devoted to the subject, and more space than these columns allow us.

What then, to begin, are the prominent features of New York fashionable society — those for instance that would first strike an entire stranger who, armed with the proper letters and habiliments, should tumble in upon the middle of a season? The most remarkable is one which would seem at first sight rather adapted to the observation of the medical than the fashionable traveller,



being a dancing epidemic of the kind well known in the history of physic. Yet such is the power of example and fashion in rendering habitual and ordinary the most abnormal states of mind and body, that we are compelled to place first among the characteristics of our exclusives the *Polkomania*, or feverish excitement after foreign dances of luscious and familiar character. Such epidemics have been of frequent occurrence. The *Tarantism* of Italy, popularly attributed by the ignorant peasantry of that country to the bite of the Tarantula or ground-spider, is the most notorious. "In the fourteenth century, soon after the terrible pestilence of the Black Death" (we quote from Dr. Hecker, as translated in a recent number of the *Westminster*), "a new epidemic appeared in Europe of an extraordinary character, showing itself in a *violent and involuntary motion of the muscles of the legs*. The physicians of the time formed the idea that if the patients were encouraged to dance until they fell down exhausted with the fatigue of the exertion, a reaction would commence by which a cure might be promoted. Bands of music were, therefore, provided for the use of the afflicted, and *airs of the Polka character were composed*, to suit the wild Bacchanalian leaps which their dancing resembled. \* \* \* The common notion of the time, *countenanced by the clergy*, was, that the persons afflicted were possessed, and *the patients themselves generally fell into the same belief, and acted accordingly*."

The present epidemic seems to have become local in these parts during the youth of that generation which is just stepping off the stage, and we learn from an erudite historian cited in the 17th No. of *Salmagundi*, that the town is indebted for it to our friend de Trobriand's countrymen. This veracious traveller describes with much homely pathos how

"Gotham city conquered was  
And how the folks turned apes."

How the *Hoppingtots* (an obvious synonyme for the Gauls), "being impelled by a superfluity of appetite and a deficiency of the wherewithal to satisfy the same," resolved to invade our ancient and venerable city, and accordingly "capered towards the devoted place with a horrible and appalling chattering of voices." How "when



their army did peregrinate within sight of Gotham, and the people beheld the villanous and hitherto unseen capers which they made, a most horrific panic was stirred up among the citizens;" how the invaders pursued their siege day and night until "the fortification of the town began to give manifest symptoms of decay, *inasmuch as the breastwork of decency was considerably broken down and the curtain work of propriety blown up;*" how the Gothamites "made some semblance of defence, but *their women having been all won over to the interest of the enemy*, they were soon reduced to abject submission;" how the conquerors put them all to the fiddle without mercy; and terminates his melancholy narrative with this affecting conclusion: "They have waxed to be most flagrant, outrageous, and abandoned dancers; they do ponder on nought but how to gallantize it at balls, routs, and fandangos, insomuch that the like was in no time or place ever observed before. They do moreover devote their nights to the jollification of the legs and their days to the instruction of the heel. And to conclude: their young folk who whilome did bestow a modicum of leisure upon the improvement of the head, have of late utterly abandoned this hopeless task, and have quietly as it were settled themselves down into mere machines wound up by a tune and set in motion by a fiddle-stick."

A New York fashionable of either sex, between private rehearsals and public performances, usually occupies about seven hours of the twenty-four for six days out of seven in the practice of the Polka, Redowa, Schottisch, and other dances of the free and affectionate character. In summer at a fashionable watering place, these seven hours are not unfrequently extended to ten or eleven. In fact it is the main business of their lives; what was said in joke of Margaret Fuller, is true of them in sober earnest: *dancing is what they call religion*. Of course the immediate and necessary inference is that a man who does not dance perpetually has no business in society. When de Trobriand said that "a Ball ought not to be a meeting consecrated exclusively to the waltz or the polka, but a combination of *all* the elements of social life with a view to pleasure," his remark, which to an intelligent foreigner would seem but an allowable truism, must have been a startling paradox for many of his



readers. When he said that "the dance usurps all the floor, and the talkers, hunted from wall to wall and from door to door, are generally obliged to abandon their conversation," he did not use the language of exaggeration or caricature, but of simple truth, nay of truth understated. For he might have gone on to say, that if they do find refuge in some "protecting embrasure of a window or corner of a hall," the extraordinary circumstance of two persons preferring conversation to dancing, renders them marked at once, and the young people who are twisting about the room in each other's arms, have time, in the midst of the most affectionate embrace or operatic display, to keep an eye on Mr. Blank and Miss Dash, who are talking behind the window-curtain, and to invent some choice narrative about them afterwards.

The next striking feature in our fashionable society is its monopoly by the younger members of it. A stranger's first remark to himself on entering a New York Ball-room is, that he has fallen among a society of boys and girls. Nor do strangers only remark this; the native *habitué* is often heard to complain aloud that, just at the age when best qualified by maturity and experience to assume his proper place in society, he is ousted by some brainless boy who is better skilled in the last modification of the newest dance. Now, such a state of things would seem naturally to arise from the tacit admission that dancing the polka is the sole end of society, for very young people dance better than older ones, and are better posted up in saltatory intelligence. But here at starting a discrimination should be made, as yet unmade we believe, but very perceptible and very important. The measure of juvenility is not the same in both sexes. The women have their share, if not their fair share, of maturity. Married, nay *single* ladies of thirty — say twentyeight, are among our most eager and ceaseless polkers; married women of thirty-five who retain their good looks (and there are some such) do sometimes venture out into society, and even at a ball attract some part of the attention which is their due, thus adding another to the many instances of the power of beauty, which overcomes even the fascinations of the Redowa. The average age of bringing a young lady "out" is not much younger in New York than in London. It is of teh



"Lords of creation" that extreme youth is peculiarly predicable. Most of these Lords are juveniles of from seventeen to twenty-three, who consider a man completely *blaze* and superannuated at twenty-four. Seniors of Columbia College (where the age of admission is *fourteen*) — adventurous youths who have passed the two years which should have been the concluding ones of their course at that college, in acquiring such virtues as may be picked up during a fragmentary continental tour and a brief residence in Paris — precocious young men about town who are just old enough to have had their name six months on the books of the club — such is the material which furnishes the majority of our ball-room beaux. In a word, while our women in society are, though younger, not very much younger than women in society elsewhere, our men (or representatives of men) are mere boys; and therefore we would speak of this second distinctive feature, not as the juvenility of our leaders of fashion, but the juvenility of the *male* leaders and the disproportion of age between the sexes.

We say *disproportion of age*, for, allowing their years to be equal, as they usually are,\* the lady is virtually many years in advance. A woman, all the world over, is as old at twenty as a man is at twenty-eight; that is to say, she has as much world-knowledge as much tact, as much finesse, as much judgment of character, as much self-possession (using the term in its best sense, as distinguished from the assumed impudence of a boy fashionably christened *aplomb*), as much — cunning we were going to say, — but that is rather a harsh term to apply to a lady.

Now this disproportion of ages gives rise to many serious evils; so many, that we hardly known which to begin with. The young women must despise, or at least undervalue the young men with whom they associate, as inferior to themselves in manner, tact, and conversational power. Hence they form a low opinion of men, as men, and are tempted to value them only for their external

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\* And not only in fashionable society, or New York society, but in America generally, as every one must have noticed for himself. We remember, one wet day at a country house, reading through bodily three volumes of some Ladies' Magazine, full of indigenous tales. In most of these the hero was twenty-one, and the heroine twenty; sometimes the ages were reversed.



advantage, — personal beauty, skill in dancing — above all wealth. Here is a fearful incentive to mercenary marriages. But we prefer to confine ourselves to its effects on married life. The bride and bridegroom are the same age, say twenty-three or four, unless indeed she happens to be a year older than he. In a mere external and physical point of view the first consequence is, that she is an old woman while he is in the prime of life, for though *both* sexes among us are too apt to break themselves down, and grow old before their time, this premature decay is more general and more speedy with our females. The inconveniences, mistakes, mortifications, and jealousies that constantly arise from such discrepancy, are too evident to require more than being hinted at. But this is nothing to the moral phase of the question, the effect which a virtual disparity of ages has had in establishing a *gynocracy*. That a *gynocracy* does exist, no one conversant with fashionable life will be hardy enough to deny. In nine cases out of ten the lady rules the roast. That cardinal duty of a wife, *respect for her husband*, is utterly ignored by her. He is regarded as little more than an upper servant. (It certainly speaks well for our women of ton, that thus far they have so little abused this power: a state of things may well be imagined in which, under the corrupting influence of foreign ideas, it would run into terrible license.) Now the main cause of this is undoubtedly the original equality (which is virtual disproportion) of ages. As the bride, we repeat it, is substantially ten years older in all world-knowledge than the bridegroom, she soon gets the upper hand of him. If he is a man of some character, the fight may last two or three years; occasionally he is driven by his domestic troubles into evil courses, in which cases he usually goes to work with the national rapidity and earnestness, so as to kill himself off in twelve months, and leave his widow more triumphant than disconsolate. Generally he lets down his ears, "*ut iniquæ mentis asellus*," and submits his back to the burden. "And what if he does?" exclaims some gallant or fair reader, "is it not all for the best? have you not just said that the ladies do not abuse their power?" Verily, not that; they abuse it much less than might have been expected, for which we are thankful; but still there are



great evils inherent in female domination. The inability of the fair sex to distinguish accurately between *income* and *capital* is notorious. The gynocracy has also fostered the Polkmania — *Their women having been won over to the interest of the enemy*, says the sage historian in Salmagundi. But especially mischievous is it for the additional tyranny, the *imperium super imperio*, which it raises up in after years. *The rule of the mother involves and produces the rule of the daughter*. Women are apter to spoil children than men: the young lady soon learns to manage her mamma; that is, to manage the whole house — and thus the household of a New York gentleman presents a most Hibernian and reversed-pyramid aspect of government; the marriageable daughter is Queen Paramount, the mother *vice-reine*, and the husband and father a species of steward, whose business is to secure seats at the Opera, to look after the baggage when travelling, and to pay (no small item that) the bills of *Madame* and *Mademoiselle*.

And now for our moral deductions and suggestion. We have looked at the two most palpable features of our fashionable society; its exclusion of the head in favor of the heels, and the extreme youth of the male portion of it. We have seen that these involve absurdities and evils; indeed, that they *are* absurdities and evils in themselves. We have seen that the latter of them has some bearing on the former. The inference follows of itself. Our young men are let into society too soon. It is desirable that they should be kept back at least four years, and launched at twenty-two instead of eighteen. Our collegiate course is not sufficiently extended: our collegians are "educated" too soon. The excuse generally urged for this, is the necessity of a young man's making his own fortune, and the inability of his parents to pay for his education beyond a certain time — excuses which do not apply to the class of persons of whom we are speaking; and yet in New York, where men are better able to bear the expense of a thorough education for their sons than any other city of our Union, the boys enter and leave college at an earlier age than in any other city. Not that we would insinuate, for a moment, that the standard of study at Columbia is below that at Yale or Harvard; on the contrary we know it, in classics



at least, to be higher; but we do say that the students enter and leave it at too early an age, and that they should be retained longer, which would afford the opportunity of greatly enlarging and improving the course. The same remark is applicable to the Collegiate department of our University; and this is our first suggestion towards social reform. It is a remedy to which every father could contribute his mite; nay, every young man himself, of discretion and true ambition. The effect would be every way beneficial. Our young men, coming into society with their minds formed, would be able to command the attention and respect of women who now use them merely as machines to dance with, or attach to them a temporary interest, from sensuous or mercenary motives. They would be more likely to marry upon reflection, and to get wives of a suitable age; that is to say, at least five or six years younger than themselves, and consequently to be properly looked up to and respected by those wives. Moreover, as their education would be thorough enough to fructify not only would they start better than now, but they would improve more rapidly. At present (owing in a great measure to our precocious and superficial education), one reason why the boy of eighteen, so often usurps the place of the man of thirty is, that there is not so much difference between the intellectual calibre and weight of character of the boy of eighteen and the man of thirty as there ought to be — as there is in some other countries. The Polkamanian would be considerably abated, for clever women, who are now driven to dance from having no talkable person to talk to, would find opportunity for intervals of sensible conversation; and the young men, having some furniture in their heads, would not be perpetually thinking of their feet. True, there are “human beings erect upon two legs, and bearing all the outward semblance of men,” who, after passing their sixth lustrum, have no ideas but those inspired of Saracco, and no ambition beyond that of adding another to the existing four hundred and sixty figures of the German cotillion; but these creatures are happily rare, and indeed only kept in countenance by the foolish boys who envy and imitate them. And if it be objected that such a re-modelling could never be carried out, as it would be continually liable to the



intrusion of external deranging forces, in the person of every juvenile stranger from other parts of the Union, the reply is obvious, that if our denizens were to put these affairs on a right footing among themselves, these outside impertinents would soon be made to know their place, as forward boys are in other parts of the world.

Thus we have come to some practical conclusion, and our remarks, so far as they go, are in a certain sense complete. But many divisions of our subject remain. The position of married women among us, the watering-place influence, the Sybaritism of our "Upper Ten," and above all, the three great questions — 1. What constitutes the fashion and *quasi* Aristocracy of New York? 2. How is it possible to intellectualize this *quasi* Aristocracy (Mr. Willis's problem, at the solution of which we have made a partial shot already)? and 3. How far is it possible or desirable to put down foreign influence, and erect a purely native standard of taste, propriety, and fashion?

One marked feature of our Gothamite society is its Sybaritism. We use the term rather than *luxury*, or many others nearly equivalent, which might have been employed, to express much outlay of money and effort for personal decoration and nourishment — for dress, furniture, eating and drinking — and a corresponding habit of fastidiousness in such things.

The favorite expenses of different nations are sufficiently easy to ascertain, and not unamusing to distinguish. Thus, an Englishman runs out into servants and horses; and after that, his delight is to have plenty of house-room, that he may never be unable to give a stray friend a spare chamber. But he is not generally particular in his dress, so that he be sure of two changes of linen a day; or in his table, provided it affords an abundance of substantial edibles and potables. The landowner, who numbers his domestics by dozens, and his hunters by tens, walks about among his retainers in rough shoes and shooting coat, and does the honors in his own drawing-room, dressed in simple black and white, without so much ornament as a gold chain or a ruffe. If he keeps a continental *artiste*, it is more for the sake of his guests than the delectation of his own palate; while as to his furniture — one of its chief recommendations to



him is, that the greater part of it passed through the service of some generations of his ancestors before it came into his possession. Now, instal a Frenchman in such an establishment, and he would forthwith melt down a large proportion of the animals (human and other) about it into brocatel, gilding, and plate-glass; nor would he be unlikely to dispose a few of them over his own person in the shape of fancy chains, jewelled studs, or shirt and waistcoat embroidery. Now, the New Yorker, having all the Frenchman's fondness for jewellery and patent leather, superadds to it the one vanity of the Englishman — the inexhaustible supply of fresh linen; and similarly in his fare he unites the Englishman's profusion with the Frenchman's delicacy, besides a certain discriminating taste in wine peculiar to himself. We believe our fashionables go to a greater proportional expense for eating and drinking than any similar class in the world. In furniture, the taste is very French, though even here we have a knack of combining the most expensive habits of *both* nations. A Frenchman, in furnishing his house, always has a tendency to run out largely into plate-glass — it is a characteristic trait of his vanity — he likes to see numerous multiplications of himself. On the other hand, he is sometimes vulnerable in the article of carpet, which is the Englishman's strongest point. The New Yorker has impartially adopted the one's love for numerous showy mirrors, and the other's predilection for comfortable and costly carpeting. Our towns-people certainly go to great expense for furniture, whether we consider the fortunes of the furnishers or the size and style of the houses furnished. We have known the mere internal painting and decorations — what a friend of ours calls the *Plattification* of a house — to cost nearly as much as the building, and the furniture to cost half as much as house and lot together. The consequent want of correspondence between interior and exterior is often very striking, and it was doubtless the report of some such incongruity by an observant cockney, which gave rise to Mr. Alison's brilliant discovery, that "the houses of wealthy Americans are very plain externally, and very magnificent within, like those of the Jews in the middle ages — and for the same reason."



Some will be disposed to regard this increasing sybaritism of ours as a sign of our progress in civilization; and of civilization in the mere material sense of the term, according to the distinction drawn by Coleridge, it doubtless is. But to real *cultivation* and the highest progress it is decidedly antagonistic. It directly increases the power of mere wealth in society, and consequently increases the difficulty of bringing intellect into its proper place. It also keeps many very desirable people out of society, because they have too little fortune or too much prudence to live up to the fashionable standard of expense. Still worse, it effeminizes the men and makes mere sugar dolls of the women. The former scorn to encase their white hands in anything less delicate than French kid; the latter would faint at the sight of the shoes which all English ladies use for walking; and both sexes debar themselves of proper out-door exercise for fear of soiling their fine clothes.

Let no one tax us with asceticism, or Grahamism, or any other *ism*. We honor all the Fine Arts, and cheerfully admit the dressing of bodies (living or dead) to a place among those arts. We have a most proper respect for the tailor, so long as he keeps in his place and does not usurp too much attention. To the advantages of a well-spread table, no one is more feelingly alive than ourselves. We look upon the dinner as a great social, political, moral, and literary agent. But sybaritism and extravagance are by no means necessarily conducive to true hospitality and table-æstheticism — but very often the reverse. Even as we write, there rises up before us a supper at which “we assisted” some few years ago, and which has ever since been recorded in the recording tablets of our mind as a supper of suppers. The table was spread in a library, walled in with musty tomes and full of comfortable old furniture, not very different from what is around us at present. A jolly set we were, all sorts and ages — a Semi-Puseyite Congregational parson, and an ex-president of the Jockey Club; a merry old doctor and a sarcastic young poet; a travelled bibliographer, who had studied men as well as books, and observed the cities and dispositions of more people than did old Ulysses; a literary merchant, who had given up making money to buy pic-



tures, and who knew something about the pictures he bought — every two were a contrast, and all of us cemented together by a feeling of good fellowship and mutual appreciation. One genius of the party concocted the punch, another genius assisted the cook in stewing the oysters. There was plenty of cold game and hot baked potatoes; there was *quantum suff.* of good malt liquor, and a few prime bottles of Cordon Bleu; there was only one man-servant on the premises, and him we dispensed with as soon as possible; and that night we didn't go home till morning. Had there been an "occasional" hired waiter in the room, or a dish of Weller's spun-sugar work, or one of Delmonico's sham silver skewers, or had the sofas been too fine to loll upon, or the curtains not used to stand smoke, it would have spoiled the whole affair.

One cause of the sumptuousness of our extraordinary fare is the poverty of our ordinary. Many things are hard to procure good in New York, but the hardest of all is a good cook. Many a man would like to give cosy little banquets to six or eight friends, but he dare not trust the Irishwoman in his kitchen (it is a libel on the respectable name of *cook* to apply it to such creatures). Therefore, as he *has* to call in the confectioner, he thinks it will be cheaper to put three or four dinners into one, and so he gives a "kill-off" to twenty or twenty-four people — just the sort of dinner one does *not* like to be asked to. Hence too, so many men, married and unmarried, dine luxuriously and expensively at the club (it is a characteristic of our clubs that a dinner at them costs more than anywhere else), rather than keep Lent all the year round at home. The Bostonians are in advance of us here. They are tolerably supplied with good plain private cooks, and that of itself is one reason why society should be more intellectual there than here. Wealthy men of late, have adopted a laudable habit of making donations for public objects. We suggest to the next of our millionaires who dies — no, it is not necessary that he should die — who wishes to be a public benefactor, that he found a free academy for the instruction of cooks. It would be a most beneficial and glorious institution. Meanwhile we beg those disciples of progress who are so clever at teaching other people what to do



with their money — Mr. Horace Mann for instance — not to be offended at this intrusion of ours into what they doubtless consider their own exclusive domain.

Any speculations upon our society would be very incomplete without some allusion to the *watering-place*, which is a peculiarly American feature. Not but what there are watering-places in other countries, but people go to them to undress and be comfortable and comparatively unconventional, whereas our people go to our watering-places to dress more and be more fashionable and more conventional than ever. It is a half ludicrous, half painful exhibition of the pursuit of exclusiveness under difficulties. It has been frequently remarked that, whatever theories about the necessity of the contrary may be coined by natives or foreigners, there is in all our large cities, a certain exclusive set, — a *quasi* aristocracy of fashion. It has also been observed that this set is kept up and managed chiefly by the female portion of it, the men being obliged by the daily necessities of life to submit to a great deal of social democracy. Thus the banker's blacksmith may shake hands with him — or try to at least; but the banker's wife ignores the existence of the grocer's wife, who lives next door to her. This is all very well for the winter season; but the hot weather drives people out of town. Every one has not a country seat: the recent ravages committed upon more than a hundred continuous miles of the most beautifully situated summer-residences in the world under the specious name of improvement, have made our wealthy citizens not over eager to invest in a species of property which, however delightful, is held by so precarious a tenure, and lies at the mercy of the first railroad company who chooses to take it almost without compensation. So our fashionables throng to the watering-places; there they are lodged and waked and fed, along with all the world, in droves of five hundred, at the will of some despotic landlord, who considers his guests created solely for his use and profit. Unable by wealth, social position, or any other claim, to obtain any more civilized treatment than the average, they labor to keep up their distinction by "cutting a dash" in various ways, more particularly by incongruous and inept display of millinery and tailory. What can be more absurd, for instance, than ladies and



gentlemen coming in *full dress* to a *table d'hôte* dinner (often of the commonest and most scanty description) at one, two, or three o'clock! An hour after they are walking or driving, and their fine clothes covered with sand or dust. An English traveller comes to one of these feeds in his shooting-coat or linen jacket, and is set down for a clown: he has much better reason to consider the black coats and low-necked dresses about as superlatively snobbish at such a place and time. But this is only one out of the absurd selfannoyances of fashion; there are graver and really very serious disadvantages of this sort of life. The habit of doing everything under the eyes of five hundred people — the impossibility of any approach to privacy — knocks all the modesty out of youth, and fosters a love of notoriety and questionable display, the result of all which is frequently a recklessness and thorough *abandon*, as if our gay Gothamites had left all their propriety in town behind them. We have seen gentlemen, who, when at home, invariably "behaved as such," stooping to bribe a penny-a-liner for a puff of their equipage or costume; and have witnessed ball-room and post-ball-room scenes which may be most conveniently disposed of by the term *Saturnalia*.

The manifest evils of such a system, and the increase of private fortunes, have already caused the partial introduction of some qualifying expedient, such as the erection of cottages either independent of or partially connected with the hotel, and the multiplication of private parlors in the hotels themselves. Could we flatter ourselves that any remarks of ours would ever be deemed worthy the notice of those aristocratic "lords of the land," who condescend to keep hotels at our watering-places for the (not always) accommodation of the public, we should most respectfully suggest to them that large additions to their buildings, *consisting entirely of private parlors*, would be a vast accommodation to their guests, and a very good investment for themselves. The demand for private rooms is always tenfold the supply, and people will pay *any price* to get them.

We now come to speak of a very important point — the position of married ladies among us. The general American practice in this respect affords a marked contrast



to our other habits, as viewed in comparison with those of the two great European nations. For whereas in most matters we adopt a course between the French and English, with a preponderating tendency, however, to the French, here we have reversed the French rule entirely. In France a young lady is shut up like a nun — literally like a nun, for she is generally educated at a convent. Were she to be seen walking publicly with a young man (even though accompanied by a third party) she would be *compromised* for ever. Her knowledge of the world and society begins when she is married, and from that time she amuses herself as much as she can. With us, the young lady has her full swing while a young lady, and subsides very much after marriage. The English practice is a medium between ours and the French.

One thing ought to be premised at starting — that if our married ladies do not take a very prominent place in society, it is not because they are shut up by their brutes of husbands, nor is it fair to blame the latter for the comparative seclusion of their wives. The husbands never have any voice in the matter. Our married women were at first very domestic, because the paucity and incapacity of their servants made their presence indoors necessary. This necessity no longer exists, or exists to a much less degree; but the female tribunal of scandal has as repressing an influence. If the diminution of a young wife's gaiety is not owing to the increasing cares or expense of her family, it is much more attributable to fear of her own sex than to the selfishness of her husband. We suspect our friend De Trobriand's characteristic gallantry has led him a little astray here. Acute and courteous as his remarks are, we do not consider that they cover the whole ground, or are strictly fair to all parties. The purport of them amounts to this. American men are certainly irreproachably faithful as husbands and fathers. Their whole affections are concentrated in their wives and children, for whom they make money, and on whom they spend it. Nevertheless, they do not fulfil their duties; and their beautiful and virtuous wives are often unhappy, for their husbands do not continue to play the lover, do not take the trouble to pay them *petits soins*, they do not try enough to amuse them, and prevent



that *ennui* which (to the mind of a Frenchman) is the necessary consequence of staying at home in the evening.

It so happened, that almost simultaneously with M. Trobriand's "Femmes," there appeared in Major Noah's paper an article which may be fairly said to present the other side of the case — the Anglo-Saxon view against the Celtic, or the husband's defence against his wife's volunteer advocate. It was immediately suggested by some of the recent divorce cases, was written with the strong common sense which is characteristic of the Major's productions, and (save only one unlucky sentence of bathos, in which "the sacrifice of real estate by referees' sales" forms a grand climax to the sufferings of the lonely husband, the desolate wife, and the worse than orphaned children) in very eloquent and effective English. The Major discourseth thus. Our wives expect too much from their goodmen. They do not consider their daily toils and anxieties. A man comes home in the evening after stocks have fallen, or one of his debtors has absconded, or the other side has carried a point against him in court, and his wife pouts and looks chilly, because he is not in a fit state to pay her nice little compliments and attentions, or to carry her off to some show. This the Major thinks is very unreasonable. In comparing these opposite views, it seems but just to begin with the *realities*, and then proceed to the *sentimentalities* of the case. Let us look then a moment at the actual daily occupation of man and wife. Very few of our married men but are in some business or profession. And the few who have no stated pursuit, are not on that account released from a troublesome amount of miscellaneous business. Cooper has well said that "it requires no less care to *keep* a fortune in this country than to make it." The man of property and leisure, who has only to go down to the bank every quarter-day, when the dividends fall due, and draw his five or ten thousand, is a *rara avis* indeed. No, the fashionable lady's husband is usually a lawyer, or merchant, or broker, or a gentleman on the look-out for eligible investments, and he works all day as only an Englishman or an American *can* work. Meanwhile, what is his wife about? Her housekeeping and nursery duties, provided as she is with *bonnes* and maids, do not occupy her an hour a day.



She passes her mornings in driving about, in the tittle-tattle of those scandal manufactories the "receptions," in consultations with her dress-maker and milliner, in shopping and running up bills, which her husband works to pay. It is no exaggeration to say, that the idlest married gentleman has more necessary daily occupation than the most industrious married lady.

Now, such being the case, it does seem to us, that when they meet at the close of the day, if either party has a right to expect amusement of the other, it is the *man* who may naturally and justly ask his wife to amuse him. And there are ways enough in which she might do so, if she did not think it a diminution of her own dignity and consequence. For instance, most of our women are musically educated, and attain very respectable vocal or instrumental power of performance — quite enough to be very pleasing and soothing. But what lady of fashion would think of playing or singing for the delectation of only her husband? She would think it a most inappropriate casting of her pearls. Or again, suppose a poor fellow, who has written at his desk by day till he has no eyes left at night, should ask *madame* to read for him. Would she not think herself martyred by the bare hint?

But further, M. Trobriand's disquisition is all predicated on the French conception of *home*, which is a very depreciating one, or, rather in fact, none at all. For a Frenchman does not know what *home* means. He has no such word in his language; he has no idea corresponding in the English word in his heart. It is no bull to assert of him that he never feels at home but when he is abroad. To say, then, that M. Trobriand cannot put himself to the place of an un-Gallicized Anglo-Saxon householder, that he cannot understand or appreciate the feelings, the tastes, the sympathies, the *passions* —

("We thank thee, *Gaul*, for teaching us that world")

— is only to say that he is a Frenchman. A Parisian's ideas of domesticity are necessarily connected with vulgarity and *ennui*. The discomforts of the *ménage* are the most ordinary topic of the Parisian caricaturist with pen or pencil. But to our Anglo-Saxon man it is quite another matter; "dressing-gown and slippers" do not "destroy his



illusions," or vulgarize his associations, or bore him. After a day of such work, physical or mental, or both, as a Celt cannot *imagine*, he has discharged that day's duty to his family; he needs, and he *deserves* repose and recreation. And it is not either repose or recreation to him to begin his day's work over again — to get up an elaborate toilette for a concert or ball. His refreshment and delight are to enjoy the conversation of his wife and the prattle of his children; to read his evening paper leisurely over a cosy cup, of tea; or if an old friend drops in, to have a literary chat, or to play at billiards or metaphysics, or even to "talk horse," so much the better.

This domestic comfort, saith the Baron, with a virtuous alacrity to "damn the sins he has no mind to," is the "calculation of a misplaced egotism." Whatever be its motive, it is a calculation very seldom realized. However tired the husband may be with working all day, he must run out again at night to amuse his wife, who, having no self-resources, is tired with doing nothing all day. How many yawning unfortunates we have noticed at the opera! where the system of fashionable gossip has the happy effect of making the place a bore to a wearied man, whether he likes the music or not. If he does not, it is of course no gratification to him; if he does, all his pleasure is sure to be spoiled by little beaux running into the box, and chattering just as the choicest *morceaux* are sung. How many unfortunates, too tired or too wise to dance, have we seen at balls, far into the small hours, dead knocked up with waiting for their rotatory halves, and vainly seeking solace in the punch-bowl! We shall never forget a young husband — clever enough in business, with a fair sporting turn, but by no means so fashionable as his wife — whom we once encountered in just such a predicament, soon after honeymoon. His beautiful bride had been polking since nine; it was then half-past three, and that emblem of a bad eternity, the German cotillion, was about one third through, say in the sixtieth figure. Poor B. —! He had drunk up all the punch — nothing was left of it but the lemon-skins and the big ladle — and there he stood in the corner, supporting a bouquet equal in splendor and cir-



cumference to that historical one of Mrs. Kemble's,\* and making a number of disparaging observations about the cotillion and the man at the head of it. How delighted he was on seeing us, to find a companion in misery, and how he did begin to expatiate on Trustee and Lady Suffolk!

It is utterly unfair then for M. Trobriand to insinuate that our husbands keep their wives out of society, for whenever the wife wishes to launch out into the extremity of fashionable dissipation, she pulls her husband after her, will-he nill-he. A little further on he has hit upon the real reason of our married ladies' comparative seclusion. It is "*cet esprit de commérage*," the spirit of gossip and scandal, which he justly stigmatizes as a provincialism unworthy the metropolis of the new world. His remarks on this point are very just in the main, though we cannot agree with *all* his inferences and illustrations (some of which his translator has left out altogether, while others he has ingeniously contrived to divest of all meaning). We would instance particularly his observations on the popular judgment of a married woman's preferences in comparison with those of a girl, where he has entirely confused two things, which are, and ought to be, in their nature essentially different.

We conclude then on the whole, that if married women do not take their proper place in society, it is, first, because they are afraid of each other's tongues. The remedy for this is in their own hands, or rather their own mouths; our sex should not be held responsible for it. Secondly, because if they do not dance there is a deficiency of sensible and amusing men to talk to them. One way of obviating this, would be to make all our matrons continue polking till forty; such an expedient we are sure M. Trobriand has too much sense to recommend. Another and more satisfactory way (to which we have already alluded) would be to increase the number of actual men in society.

And now, at length, for our social problems. Before we can speak clearly of any probable or desirable influences on any society, we must have some definite idea

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\* "Almost as big as the interesting youth who walked in with it." — *Vide* her diary.



of what that society is; therefore, it is necessary in the first place to inquire, what constitutes the fashionable society of New York? Not a very easy question to answer; we suspect many a man, who is in the thickest of it, would be puzzled to tell himself how he came there. Perhaps we can best and soonest arrive at a conclusion by examining in detail the different requisites which have been or might be alleged.

First then, is there anything corresponding to what is understood abroad by the terms *rank, blood, family, &c.*? Clearly next to nothing. Our state or federal dignitaries, if they mix in fashionable society at all, either appear there as transient lions, or owe their position in it to circumstances independent of and antecedent to their political elevation. Of the descendants of our old Dutch settlers, some are in society and some not. Of our fashionables, some have no grandfathers, and others no fathers. To speak candidly, our observations of the family-aristocracies which exist in some parts of our Union, do anything but make us regret the absence of such distinctions here. In some of our southern cities the aristocracy and fashion of the place consists of six or eight old families, who associate and intermarry exclusively with one another. And for this very reason — because they have not refreshed and strengthened themselves by forming connexions with the talent and wealth of other classes, they have fallen into the pitiable position of an aristocracy without talent or money, their lack of the former preventing them from being of any use, their lack of the latter from being much ornament; and altogether they lead a very seedy and disappointed sort of existence. But to return from this brief digression.

2dly. Does talent or literary reputation enter into the requisites for a fashionable? So far from it, our fashionables seem to be growing up in the most shocking state of *illiterature*, and to have very generally agreed among themselves, that talent (save of the heels) is a thing conveniently to be dispensed with. There are a very few literary men fairly in the heart of fashionable society, and a few more *half-in*, as it were — whom one meets at some, but not at all, or at all the best entertainments of a season. But most of them, like the



political celebrities in the same situation, owe their position to circumstances independent of their literary merits.\*

Is it mere money, then, that gives fashionable position? A certain class of writers would answer *yes* — and make a great mistake in doing so. The difference between the fashion and the “second set” is not one of mere income. We know of people living on two thousand a year in the former circle, and of millionaires in the latter. No doubt money is an important element in a fashionable position — and we should like to know in what large city of the civilized world it is not. A great deal has been said (chiefly by some noble *littérateurs*) about the exclusiveness of the old French nobility — how they despise bankers and such parvenus, and refuse to associate with them. Now, let us put against this the well-known fact, that a rich American who goes to Paris and gives magnificent balls, can make sure, so soon as it is well established that the balls *are* magnificent, of having all the Faubourg St. Germain at them. True, he cannot boast of being invited to their entertainments in return, for the simple reason that these people never give any: they prefer to illustrate, at the expense of others, the proverb about a certain class of persons who make feasts and a certain other class who eat them. But John Bull — he has the real uncontaminated no-mistake aristocracy of blood, and birth, and breeding, that keeps the vulgar rich at a distance. Indeed! What English statesman was it that said, “every man with ten thousand a year had a right to hope for a peerage?” But that was some time ago. Let us come down to our own day. In the present parliament — Lord John Russell’s parliament — there was a Mr. George Hudson, who had been a linen-draper’s assistant — what

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\* We shall never forget a conversation we once overheard on this subject, between a distinguished author, who happened also to be a fashionable pet, and an old friend of his. The author was lamenting that literary talent had not its proper place in our society, and that literary men, as such, were rather looked down upon. The other urged his own case against him. “What man is more generally invited than yourself, or more gladly welcomed?” “Yes,” replied the author, and for the first time in the course of a long acquaintance, we saw a slight shade of bitterness pass over his fine features, “but it is because I am a friend of the A. ’s, and the G. ’s, and the S. ’s (mentioning several wealthy families) and not on account of my books.”



we call a dry-goods clerk — in a county town, and had such refinement and polish as might be expected from such beginnings; but he had made (or was supposed to have made) a colossal fortune by railway speculating; he played old tory and supporter of the aristocratic interest, and the aristocracy took him up and courted him. His wife had the looks of a cook and the manners of a washerwoman; her conversation was a mixture of Mrs. Malaprop's and Mrs. Ramsbottom's, and her blunders the jest of the town; but then she was the wife of the rich Mr. Hudson, and displayed on her portly bust a diamond necklace, which rumor valued at thirty thousand pounds; and so aristocratic dames received her and smiled upon her. *Now*, to be sure, this unlucky couple are cast off, because their bubble has burst; but the memory of what they were cannot be so easily obliterated.

It may be argued, however, that the rich man has a greater advantage here than in Europe, from the fact of his having one rival element of consideration the less to contend against — that of rank or family; to which it is conceded, that there is nothing appreciable corresponding among us. But against this advantage must be set off a drawback which does not exist over the water — unless, indeed, the progress of democracy may have recently introduced it in France. One of our worst social evils, whatever be its origin, is an extreme spirit of envy, not confined to any class, but extending to all. Not only are the democracy spitefully envious of the quasi-aristocracy, but the quasi-aristocrats are spitefully envious of one another, and of those who are superior to them in any temporal desirabilities. When, therefore, a man essays to put himself forward in society, by means of mere expenditure, it is true that he finds no hereditary class to decide against his claims; it is true that he has the power (greatly augmented by the increasing spirit of Sybaritism) to purchase a number of fashionable toadies; but he has also to undergo the ordeal of more secret envy and open scandal than he would encounter in a European capital.

Finally, then, is social position referable to a certain standard of taste, ornament in manners, and fashion generally? We are inclined to think that it is, and that the standard of reference is the Parisian. Our young



lions dress like Frenchmen, and take delight in bringing home trunks full of Parisian habiliments. Our ladies are close copies of the Paris fashions. Our millionaires import from Paris the furniture of their houses, and would import the houses ready built were it possible. The genial custom of "seeing mahogany" after dinner is in imminent danger of abolition, because it is not in accordance with Parisian habits. To have been in Paris is our "having swum in a gondola." People who would not know each other here, become acquainted there. For an unfashionable family, who, from sudden acquisition of wealth or other motives, have aspirations to the fashionable, the shortest way from Pearl street to Washington Place is through Paris. A geographical paradox; but very true for all that.

One thing must be borne in mind. It is the external rather than the intellectual standard of Parisian refinement that is imported and adopted — the civilization rather than the cultivation, to keep up the Coleridge distinction. And this for two reasons. First, a great deal of the French wit and piquancy depends on the language and national character, and is not easily transferable to the language or character of an Anglo-Saxon people. Secondly, the society to which the standard is transferred being immature in comparison to that from which it is transferred — boys instead of men, young ladies instead of married women — is less capable of appreciating the intellectual, and more apt to confine itself to the external elements.

Now then it is time to come to our second problem, How our quasi-aristocracy can be intellectualized. A fearful question truly, to judge from many things which we have already taken note of; still, it is not to be shunned or despaired of. And first, let us put in a  *caveat* , very necessary to our right understanding of the matter. The literary man must not expect too much. If he repines and thinks himself ill-used because he is not made a lion of fashion, he errs as much as when he grumbles because he has not realized by his writings so large a fortune as the banker or broker has by his speculations. In either case he undervalues his high privileges, and shows a disposition to sell his birthright for a very moderate mess of pottage. It seems but just



and fitting that, as those who devote themselves to money-making generally make the most money, so those who devote themselves to the study and pursuit of fashion should be the fashionable leaders. Let us take an extreme case to illustrate our meaning. Dickens is probably the most striking example extant of a *snob of genius* — a great name in literature without the feelings or education of a gentleman. It is not possible to fancy him associating genially and naturally with highbred men and women, for he has no real conception of what they are, as is evident from the terrible failures he makes whenever he introduces them into his writings. Now suppose Dickens were to consider himself unjustly treated, because the *Almacks* and *Morning Post* people did not run after him, and ask him to their balls.\*

Let us remember, moreover, that it is unfair to judge the fashionable gentleman by a purely intellectual standard. Take a goodnatured man of prepossessing exterior and elegant manners, who has travelled enough to observe the habits and tastes of the principal European nations; let him have a little ear for music, and a good eye for dress and decorations; add to this a handsome fortune, with a liberal disposition, that prompts him to spend it in generous hospitality, and you have a person calculated to take a prominent position in society. You are glad to know him yourself, and to introduce friends from abroad to him; you look upon him altogether with considerable respect, if not admiration. And yet he is not merely non-literary, but positively unintellectual. His conversation does not instruct or amuse. He would be an absolute nuisance shut up with you in your library for a long winter evening; the dead bore of an after-dinner *tête-à-tête* with him would not be alleviated by the best *Latour* he could pour out for you. Yet if he were gone out of society you would miss him very much. Conversely, a very clever man may be a great bore in mixed society, if he has a habit of falling into reveries instead of attending to the person he is supposed to be talking to, or if he introduces his learning or his criti-

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\* A friend who is looking over our shoulder says that Box does think this very thing, and is quite savage against the aristocracy in consequence. We suspect our friend must be mistaken: Box could hardly be such a dummy.



cisms inaptly (if, for instance, he *will* quote Latin to ladies, as some Bostonians we wot of are apt to do), or if he pertinaciously neglects the proprieties of dress, or in any other way assumes a *dispensing power of genius*, and practically claims the right to do or omit things which ordinary mortals may not.

There is indeed one species of intellectual display for which there is as much room in fashionable society as in the most purely literary circles, and which is as congenial to the former as to the latter — we mean *conversational talent*. This is the kind of cleverness which we may most reasonably expect from, and are most likely to find in the man or woman of fashion. In its perfection it is seldom connected with any great ability on paper. The strongest cases which are popularly adduced of the union of both talents — Theodore Hook for example — are in reality rather evidence the other way. Not one tenth of Hook's extant writing comes up to his traditional renown for conversational wit. Every man, we believe, who has been much conversant with both writers and talkers, can supply instances from his own observation of persons who, having displayed very decided talent in conversation, and being tempted thereby to write, have very much disappointed their friends when they came to appear on paper. Indeed, when we consider the number of books written nowadays, so large that even a diligent reader does not get through with more than a thousandth part of them, it is to be wished on all accounts, that, when people can talk really well, they should confine their energies to talking.

It must be confessed that the popularity of brilliant conversationalists among us is somewhat diminished by a fear of their satirical powers and propensities. Nor is this fear altogether unfounded. We have been often pained to observe this abuse of wit give point to ill-natured remarks, and have wondered why our best talkers were so apt to be bitter. This union of cleverness and ill-nature is one of the most deplorable consequences of that envious spirit to which we have had occasion to allude. It is a connection that ought to be broken off, and it is worth the attention of our good-natured and sensible ladies (there are plenty such) to devise some means for the purpose. Perhaps as every-



thing is done by societies and associations nowadays, a plan of this sort might be started, "for the encouragement of witty conversation without personal detraction." Small prizes might be assigned to the deserving — neatly bound copies of Willis and de Trobriand; while incorrigible offenders against the penultimate commandment might be sentenced to read back numbers of the *North American Review*.

If, then, our boys were kept longer at college, if our girls were taught that the Polka-Redowa is not the chief end of life, if our married women went more into society, and that not merely for dancing purposes, if our literary men who have fashionable aspirations would not take ultra-literary airs, if our clever talkers would not pander to the unhealthy appetite for detraction, if our party-goers would be content with less champagne and oysters, in exchange for more "feast of reason" — if all these changes could be brought about, there is no doubt that our fashionable intercourse would be much more intellectual and soul-satisfying than it is at present. *If!* Alas, who shall pretend to count the possible gathering of small birds, were the sky to fall in some day! *If* these changes were brought about! *when* or *how* should they be? — and our melancholy echo, like the Irishman's, answers — "Really I can't tell."

And now for the last question — How far is it possible or desirable to originate or maintain a *native* standard of taste, propriety, and fashion? That our society should in its commencement borrow largely from Europe was in the nature of things unavoidable. At first it inclined to be a provincial and colonial imitation of the English. Most of Paulding's early satires were directed against Anglomania. Of late years this has been entirely altered, and we are becoming rapidly Gallicized. Many are disposed to measure our progress in civilization and refinement, by our progress in this imitation of the French. So are not we. While readily acknowledging the superiority of the Parisians in coffee, confectionery, and gloves — in dress and cookery generally — we are not prepared to accept their standard of decorum or morality, or indeed of taste, in all things. Of their inability to enjoy or understand domestic felicity we have already spoken. Nor is it to be wondered at,



when we consider that the whole French theory of matrimony is fundamentally wrong, being founded on the *mariage de convenance*, or union of *so much to so much*. Surely there is no fear of any such perversion of our customs here, it will be said; for our young people would never let their parents make such matches for them. True enough, but there is danger of something even worse — that they may make such matches *for themselves*. An increasing sybaritism is a dangerous incentive to mercenary unions, and this sybaritism, be it remembered, we owe in a great measure to the French; it is much more a Parisian than an English or home growth. Are our morals generally improving under this new *régime*? Nay, for that matter, are the manners of our young men so much improved? Is there not observable among them a growing tendency to mistake impudence for self-possession, and to talk to ladies at home as they would to actresses and dancing-girls abroad? But to return to the other point. Could Mr. Willis say now, as unhesitatingly as he did several years ago, that "morality is the best card for a young man to play, if he wishes to advance his position in society?" Is there not an attempt — we are glad to say an *attempt* merely as yet — to make vice fashionable? We wish all these questions could be promptly answered in the negative; but some of our sad experience would prompt an answer the other way.

Surely there are social features purely native, which manifest as much refinement and cultivation as any exotic ones. That chivalrous treatment of women — that sentiment, so conspicuous and prevailing, that the most bigoted and mendacious foreigners have been constrained to admit its power — a feeling that makes every gentleman the natural protector of every lady, and saves woman every day from molestations or anxiety in situations which, in other countries, would require for her the miraculous guard of *Una* — a feeling which, carried to the verge of the absurd in some things, and beyond the verge of the prejudicial in others, as we admit that it is, still betokens a most advanced state of real civilization — is this sentiment of foreign origin? Is it not our indigenous growth? Take another trait, now we fear not so strongly marked as formerly, but still peculiarly



American, in contra-distinction to the habitual judgment of the fashionable world in other countries — the idea that a gentleman is bound to pay, not only his debts of honor, but his tradesmen's bills also. Or, to descend to merely material considerations, have we not excellent tailors and hatters of our own? Is there a city in the world that can boast better Madeira than our own Gotham? Do we not build as good carriages and raise as good horses as the English do, and better than any of the Continental nations can? Your travelled exquisite thinks it low-toned and vulgar to boast of such matters, but we hold that it is as much more vulgar as it is less sensible to slight the good things we have, for an indiscriminate eulogy and imitation of what is foreign. Why should we turn our shirt collars up or down as the French happen to do, without any reference to the peculiarities of our climate? Why should we, who dine at four or five, go to balls at eleven, because the Europeans do so, their hour of dining being about seven, and the majority of their men not being expected at their offices by nine next morning? Far be it from us to run into the other extreme of depreciating all things and men foreign. "Clever men learn many things even from their enemies," said a clever man of old.\* *Every* nation might learn or adopt some things with advantage from foreigners; we are surely no exception. But let our adoption be with discrimination. We may make the French our patterns in dress, without making them also our patterns in propriety. Above all, *do* let us remember that Paris is not the only city in the world besides New York, and that there are other places where something may be learned, and whence somewhat might, without disadvantage, be borrowed.

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\* Aristophanes, *Aves*, 376. ἀλλ' ἅπ' ἐχθρῶν δῶτα πολλὰ  
μανθάνουσιν οἱ σοφοί.

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## A R I S T O P H A N E S.

Literary World, March 1850.

*The Birds of Aristophanes, with Notes, and a Metrical Table, by C. C. Felton, Eliot Professor of Greek Literature in Harvard College. Cambridge, Mass.: John Bartlett, 1849.*

IF we have been somewhat behindhand in noticing this edition, it is simply because, not being afraid of the "prejudice" which Sydney Smith is said to have alleged as a dissuasive from the practice, we usually read a book before reviewing it. But inasmuch as one is peculiarly apt to get a prejudice for or against a classical editor by reading him, it is most fitting and proper to go over the original very carefully, and make up one's mind on all the pleasant little disputed passages before touching the editor's comments at all, and this we have done also, and it is not a work of one sitting. Truly a thankless and profitless vocation is that of the conscientious reviewer among us! He devotes more time to the composition of a short essay than many "popular" authors (of the yellow-and-brown-paper school) require to turn out a volume, collates old note-books, grubs among musty quartos, corrects and re-corrects proofs that make him suspect the compositors of being in the pay of some secret society for the encouragement of profanity; and all this for no solid pudding, and a very small amount of empty praise. Indeed his reward is usually something not very dissimilar to the proverbial "monkey's allowance." Those who show their own ignorance most plentifully whenever they write, charge him with writing to show his knowledge; those with whom the number of pages in a book and the publisher's name on its title-page go a great way towards determining their opinion of its merit, think it a shame that an anonymous writer in one corner of a periodical should pronounce on the worth of an author who comes out under his own colors in a great calf or sheep-bound octavo; and others again, who would probably be



startled at the paradox that no man can appreciate a dinner unless able to cook it, fall foul of him for not writing bad books himself instead of exposing the bad books of others. Verily we are sometimes tempted to sigh after the flesh-pots of monarchy, when we think how reviewers over the water gather in gold and *xũdos* together, especially when aggravated by the remembrance of a drop of the shower that once fell upon ourselves, what time having occasion to despatch fourteen pages of manuscript across the Atlantic, we received ourselves by the next steamer in fair type, without a misprint, and with the supplementary honorarium of five guineas.

But as it is, our reviewing, whether a good or a bad action, must be its own reward; and we must console ourselves with the pleasure of helping to mention one who has taken the bold and meritorious step of introducing a new classic to our students. Professor Felton is as yet the only American editor of Aristophanes. The classical course in most of our colleges is so limited, so much made up of *books* rather than *subjects*, and there are so few among us who carry out their classical studies in after life, either as a business or a pleasure, that to attempt inserting a new name in the established schedule is a task that requires much courage, and seldom obtains much success. With any one but a college professor it is absolutely impossible; even a professor's influence is apt to be local, and confined to his own particular institution. We are therefore not a little pleased to find that Mr. Felton's first attempt on the old comedian,\* has met with so much success as to encourage him to a second trial.

Of the standard Greek authors, not forming a part of our usual college course, there is none, with the exception possibly of Aristotle, whom we would rather see introduced into it than Aristophanes. Admirable *per se* as one of the greatest humorists the world has ever produced, he derives additional interest and value from the light he throws upon the political and social life of Athens. In this respect his comedies are to us (the illustration is an obvious one, and has been used before) very much what a file of Athenian newspapers would

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\* The Clouds, which has gone through two editions.



be. And yet, so various are the fortunes of great authors in different ages, he was for a long time regarded by the moderns as little more than a malignant buffoon. Many of our readers doubtless remember the notices of him in Rollin, and writers of that class and time, according to whose accounts the Clouds would be about on a level with "the Serious Family," or any other ephemeral burlesque on religion and morality; and preserved to after times only by the bad reputation of having contributed to the destruction of society. Subsequently the English classical public (a term which includes a large portion of the English literary public) very generally took up the study and defence of our author, being incited thereto not only by his hearty humor, but also by his stout conservative opinions, and the earnestness, dexterity, and general applicability of his attacks on demagogues and radicals. His sarcasms and invectives against Cleon were to them enhanced by the readiness with which they could be transferred to O'Connell. From the traducer of good men he became elevated to the champion of virtue and law. And whereas his continual and undeniable detraction of Socrates remained an awkward feature in the pleasant picture drawn of him, some of his admirers went so far as to suggest that this might be all right — that Socrates was somewhat of a humbug after all, and by no means deserving his general reputation. A good deal of innuendo to this effect may be found in Mitchell. It is robbing Peter to pay Paul with a vengeance.

Much more reasonable is the Teutonic speculation that the objects of Aristophanes' attack in the Clouds were, nominally indeed, Socrates and his disciples but really Protagoras and Prodicus, the fathers and founders of the Sophists *par sang*, who had then just arrived in Athens, and were notorious lions. This interesting conjecture is supported by many ingenious and probable arguments, one of which only we shall give a hint of as a specimen. One of the most striking and important scenes in the Clouds is that where the Dicæologus and Adicologus — the Right Cause and the Wrong Cause — are introduced, arguing before the young man whom the Sophists wish to proselytize. The Wrong Cause gains the day, and the youth accordingly gives in his adhesion to Socrates. Now we learn from the Scholiast here, and



other authorities, that is was *Protagoras* who first avowedly taught how "to make the worse appear the better reason," and that from this very circumstance he acquired the nickname of *Logos*. Here then the allusion is evidently to him. Admitting, however, this supposition to its fullest extent, it only proves that Aristophanes, not being entirely ignorant of Socrates' character and tenets, nevertheless wilfully confounded him with the Sophists.

For our own part, at the risk of becoming obnoxious to the charge of great presumption, we must say that there never seemed to us anything so *very* extraordinary in this difference between the Aristophanic and the real Socrates, nor anything inconsistent with the fact of the comedian's being a good man, according to the standard of goodness in his time, and a wise man according to the standard of wisdom in any time. We might as well wonder why Sydney Smith did not appreciate the Evangelicals. What careful student of History, Literature, Politics, or Ethics, but has learned that great powers of production and of appreciation do not necessarily go together. Whether it be possible for an inferior producer or a non-producer to make a good critic (we think it is, but cannot stop now to argue the point) there can be no doubt that in every department of human knowledge very good producers have often made very bad critics. Different habits of thought or of life, social distinctions, personal enmities and friendships, mere fancy, the very fact that "*non omnia possumus omnes*" — that all men are not all-sided or many-sided — these and other causes are continually hindering men from judging accurately of each other; and the deviations of a great man's judgment are more marked than those of other men's, in proportion as its orbit is greater. Let us consider the relative positions and sentiments of the parties in this case. Aristophanes was an Athenian gentleman of ultra conservative opinions, and (as may be inferred from internal evidence, though we have little positive knowledge of his life and family) of exclusive and fastidious habits. Socrates was slovenly and eccentric in his mode of life, for which indeed we cannot commend him, inasmuch as he thereby set a bad precedent to subsequent reformers, who have often acted as though there were much godliness *per se* in a shocking bad hat, and a pair of boots that



don't match. Though really a good conservative in politics, he had introduced so many novelties in other matters as to be naturally suspected of general radicalism; while his monomania on the subject of the inspiration (popularly, but incorrectly known as the Socratic Dæmon\*), to which he conceived himself subject, would easily raise a doubt of his sanity with one who had not the opportunity of correcting the first impression by personal intercourse with him, and intimate knowledge of his mind. Then he was the particular friend of Alcibiades (whom he seems to have cultivated on the same principle that sometimes induces a virtuous matron to take up and patronize a juvenile roué, in the hope of reclaiming him, and apparently with about as much success as usually attends her efforts), and Alcibiades the demagogue was a natural enemy of the satirist. In short, appearances were against the philosopher, and appearances are most tempting to the comedian whose business is chiefly with superficial follies, and who can only investigate or introduce a principle by stealth. That Aristophanes had any personal enmity against Socrates, or that the Clouds had anything to do with the judicial murder that took place *twenty-four years* afterwards, is an opinion now sufficiently exploded, and about on a level with that which we believe still prevails among some Frenchmen — that the philosopher was put to death by the Thirty Tyrants, some of whom were his intimate friends and pupils. When we remember that Plato, whose dialogues are always conducted with the strictest regard to dramatic propriety, introduces the poet and his supposed victim familiarly conversing at the same supper-table, it is astonishing how the story should have been in circulation so early as Ælian's time, and have kept its ground so long.

Some other apparent inconsistencies are observable in the writings of Aristophanes. He is always the ad-

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\* A very clever and very odd little fellow of Trinity College, (Sydney Walker, editor of the *Corpus Poetarum Latinorum*) fancied himself subject to a divine influence precisely similar to that of Socrates. It acted just in the same way, *always prohibitory, never suggestive*; and seemed on the whole to exercise a very beneficial effect upon him.

By the way, may not the Soothsayer's answer, v. 960 of our play, τὸ Θεῖον ἐπειπόδιζε με, contain a sarcastic allusion to the Socratic inspiration?



vocate of peace with the Spartans, while at the same time he ridicules the imitators of Spartan fashions among the Athenians. But here he shows his usual wisdom, and follows the *juste milieu*, on the one hand not deeming it necessary to be always wanting to cut people's throats because they had a different form of government, on the other holding that a nation should endeavor to better itself by developing its own ideal, not by aping the habits of others. We also find him in the same breath deprecating the introduction of new gods, and ridiculing the old ones without mercy. But he evidently regarded religion as it is to be feared too many educated and respectable and intellectual men regard it now — as only a convenient device to help to govern the people. What is wicked carelessness or impious conceit in them, was, to a man with the light he had, only worldly prudence. His deities were a sort of upper cabinet: he used them as Punch does the British ministry, taking his fun out of them without stint, but ready to support their authority when in real danger.

But there is one point of attack to which Aristophanes is liable, more serious, in our view than any of the above. It is a point which has not hitherto received the attention it deserves, and we are anxiously waiting to see if Mr. Grote will say anything about it. We mean the moral picture he has drawn of his countrymen.

The well-known practice of ordinary partisan satirists is to daub one half of their canvas all black, and the other half all white. All the men on one side are angels, all those on the other brutes or devils. Warren's *Ten Thousand a Year* is a notable example of this. Now we find nothing of this kind in Aristophanes. All parties and classes in Athens are most impartially represented as thorough, unmitigated profligates. The ultra-democracy, to be sure, are snobs and low fellows into the bargain, but they have by no means the monopoly of wickedness; the Athenian gentlemen, the *Charientes* and *Calocagathæ*, the young men of cultivated minds and refined manners, whose delicacy was such that one of them, their satirist himself, would not attack *by name* two distinguished strangers on a visit, but whipped them over the shoulders of a native — all these exquisites are represented as being in the customary practice of the most



degrading vices. In the scene from the Clouds already referred to, where the Right Cause and the Wrong Cause argue, the final and triumphant argument of the latter is an appeal to the universal prevalence of wickedness, as an undisputed and indisputable fact. "What are all our public and popular men?" asks the representative of Belial, "are they not abandoned profligates? Nay what are the majority of this very audience but vile debauchees?" And then the Better Reason with a despairing assent goes over "body and goods" to the enemy. (Truly it is no wonder that the Clouds did not get any prize; such a charge must have incensed any audience, whether conscious of its truth or its falsity.) Now in describing his fellow-townsmen thus, did Aristophanes libel them, or did he tell them unpleasant but wholesome truths? Most English writers would answer the latter; we think it is Mitchell who goes so far as to affirm that the comedian exaggerated nothing except the masks. An admirer of the Athenian democracy would probably maintain on the other hand that his characters were as much distorted from the originals in their moral attributes as in their physical exterior. Which of the two views is the right one? The question is not to be summarily disposed of: it has many sides and features, and is immediately suggestive of and intimately connected with another, a very interesting one, and containing matter for a long essay in itself, viz.: — *How far is the avowedly fictitious literature of a nation to be accepted as a faithful portraiture of its morals and manners?* Probably the first impulse of most minds would be to deny its title to be so received at all. Even of writing that professes to be true, there is a great deal that is utterly untrustworthy. No unprejudiced man, for instance, would form his opinions on the morals of our public men from the statements of partisan newspapers, and no sane person believes that our ladies and gentlemen are in the habit of making assignations at confectioners', or that our ministers and deacons usually seduce young women, and own gambling houses, because some malignant penny-a-liner chooses to say so in a yellow-covered pamphlet. On the other, the picture drawn by Parisian novelists of Parisian society, improbable and undesirable to believe as it is, is proved by independent authorities to be pretty substantially



correct. A lively and discriminating writer in the American Review, some time ago, endeavored to lay down a canon for our decision in such cases, viz. that the writer of fiction was to be credited *when natural*, and he illustrated his position by drawing a comparison between Shakspeare and George Sand. But this is only throwing back the inquiry one step, for what is *natural* to one man is unnatural to another. This is true in the commonest affairs of life. It is the most natural thing in the world for an Englishman to take his canter of eighteen miles a day: to a Frenchman, who seldom makes his appearance on the outside of a quadruped, such a proceeding would be anything but natural. The English critics cannot begin to agree among themselves whether the "Currer Bell" novels, describing society in a large and well-known portion of their own country, are natural or not; and of two persons, whose age, experience, talent, and reputation, gave them an equal *a priori* claim to be considered good judges, we have heard the one say of Vanity Fair that it was a libel on human nature, the other that it was a perfectly accurate picture of society. For ourselves, we should say that in the first place, when a writer is a professed satirist, a certain allowance must be made on that account, the number of grains of salt not being susceptible of rule or measure, but to be determined by the reader's judgment and by circumstances; secondly, that the agreement and correspondence of authors is to be examined. If the majority of the fictitious writers in any age of any country, unite in representing a certain state of morals or manners, we should accept their representation subject, only to the above-mentioned allowance, quite as confidently as that of historians, essayists, or even divines. And applying this rule to the case before us, we find that the other Comic poets of Athens, so far as we have remains of them, bear Aristophanes out in the unfavorable picture he draws of Athenian morals.

And now, in connexion with this speculative question, comes up a very important practical one. How far ought we to expose this disgusting picture to our students? In other words, ought our college editions of Aristophanes to be expurgated? Here we come upon delicate ground, for Messrs. Anthon and Felton have taken directly



opposite sides on this question, and it is a perilous thing for a simple layman to put himself between two hostile professors. He is in danger of sharing the fate of Mr. Pickwick, who rushed between the belligerent editors, "just in time to receive the carpet-bag on one side of his person, and the fire-shovel on the other." Still, one must have an opinion, and of the two, we feel compelled to agree with Mr. Felton, though our reasons do not coincide with his; indeed, go much beyond them. We are most deeply impressed with the weight of the maxim, "*Maxima debetur pueris reverentia*," but by the time that a young man comes to read Aristophanes, he is usually arrived at an age when he must have some more abiding safeguard than mere innocence of everything unseemly. Nay, we think it not only permissible but absolutely desirable, that the student should read by himself some things that it would not be proper for him to read in the lecture-room. Let no one be shocked, and we will endeavour to explain why.

In the life of every man of liberal tastes and pursuits there is a period, generally coincident, or nearly so, with the culminating point of his education, when he is peculiarly assailable by the temptation of intellect-worship. The pleasures of taste and imagination, of the acquisition and the communication of knowledge, are so noble in themselves, and so exalting in their influence, so infinitely above the joys of vulgar dissipation or fashionable frivolity, that he is in danger of making them his trust, and forgetting the existence of something still nobler. He is prone to think too much of intellectual and too little of moral excellence. In the combination of original intellect and artistic development of that intellect, the Greeks have never been equalled; therefore the study of Greek literature is particularly exposed to this danger. Now if we present to a young man only the model beauties of Greek literature, with all that is improper sedulously excluded; if he is to read the First Book of the Republic and the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, and ignore the existence of the Fifth Book and the Sixth Satire, we give him a one-sided view of Heathen virtue, and indirectly suggest and encourage the mischievous delusion, that there may be a high standard of morality without vital religion. But if we give him a peep behind the



curtain — just enough to disgust him — if we let him see how the highest standard of intellect united to excellence in art and refinement of manners, is unable, without higher assistance, to save a people from shameless depravity — then we give him a most impressive lesson of the *necessity* of Christianity.

But it is time to come to the play which stands at the head of our article, lest we should be suspected of having lost sight of it altogether. The *Birds* is the sixth in chronological order of the extant Aristophanic comedies. It was exhibited during the second campaign in Sicily, and has been generally supposed to ridicule the Athenian projects of universal dominion, particularly as then manifested in the Sicilian expedition; an opinion from which we see no stringent reason for dissenting, although Prof. Felton doubts it, and Müller somewhat generally describes the piece as “a satire on Athenian folly and credulity, on that building of castles in the air, and that dreaming expectation of a life of luxury and ease, to which the Athenian people gave themselves up in the mass.” The play is opened by the appearance of two old Athenians, Piethæterus and Euelpides (*Persuader* and *Good-hope*), the former a plausible and visionary demagogue, the latter a sort of Sancho Panza to him. Disgusted with the litigiousness and fickleness of their countrymen, and not thinking it likely that they shall much better themselves in any other part of Greece (observe how Aristophanes, with all his abuse of his compatriots, is intensely *native* when it comes to making comparisons), they have resolved to travel away from men altogether, and accordingly, under guidance of a raven and jackdaw (or jay), are going in quest of the country of the birds and the court of King Épops (the Hoopoe), who was formerly a man, Tereus of Thrace, and connected by marriage with the Athenians. They have come pretty much to the world’s end without finding any signs of the king or of his courtiers and are pathetically lamenting (as many a stupid young man about town might do) that “they want to go to the devil and can’t find the way.” At length the road terminates in a rocky barrier, at which, being unable to advance further, they knock. A servant of the Hoopoe makes his appearance, and is induced to summon his master, to whom the travellers communicate their design,



and also a great scheme which they have on hand for the aggrandizement of the birds. King Hoopoe, much struck with the project, desires his consort, the nightingale, to assist him in calling his subjects to council. This *nightingale* was a celebrated female flute-player, and a delightful solo from her was added to the magnificent lyric which Epops sings here. Down came the birds, one after another, *κλαγγηδον προκαθίζοντες*, like their fellows in Homer, all sorts, sizes, and colors, and a funny sight they must have been on the stage. But great is their rage and consternation as they become aware of two mortal men, the sight of whom is necessarily associated in their minds with ideas of traps and cages, plucking and roasting. Forthwith they resolve to do justice on the intruders after the fashion in vogue south of Mason and Dixon's Line, tearing them to pieces first, and hearing what they have to say afterwards. But the old gentlemen have not lived in Athens so long or travelled so far for nothing; they have a fair appreciation of their rights, and a proper resolution to maintain them. Their baggage and kitchen equipage are converted into a rampart, their spits into spears, &c., and so formidable a front do they present, that the birds are brought to parley. Pisthetærus seizes the favorable moment, and makes them a speech. He explains to them that the feathered race were originally prior in age and superior in rank, not only to men, but even to the gods; that this position is still their right, though they have been unjustly deprived of it, and that it is in their power to recover it. (All these points are supported by most comical and ingenious arguments, a capital burlesque on such as usually go down with a popular audience.) As a means of doing so he proposes that they shall build *a city in the air*, thus cutting off the communication between gods and men, and equally preventing the fat savor of sacrifices from going up to heaven, and the gay celestials from coming down to visit the ladies to whom they are attentive on earth, while the birds are to assume the place of gods to men, which they can do at a much cheaper rate than the present deities. The oration is completely successful, the strangers are at once received into full favor, and, after singing a magnificent parabasis, which is a half serious and half burlesque synopsis of the



ancient cosmogony and theogony, the birds go off, under superintendence of Euelpides, to build the fortifications, while Pisthetærus remains to sacrifice for the welfare of the new city, *Cuckoocloudland*. The sacrifice, which is to the various *birds* instead of the various gods, is interrupted by the arrival of sundry pettifogging officials, *informers*, *reformers*, and other nuisances, who are very summarily disposed of, being in most instances kicked out headlong — a most commendable precedent for disposing of such people — and then comes in a messenger-bird, in great haste and flutter, with the astounding intelligence that the fortifications are completed, at which Pisthetærus himself is taken aback. But soon another messenger arrives, announcing that some one from heaven is trespassing in the city. It proves to be Iris. How she has flown through the walls does not exactly appear, but where the whole piece is a gigantic lie, it is not well to be too particular about slight inconsistencies. However, Pisthetærus bullies her back by sheer force of slang, after the usual manner of demagogues, and at the same time the herald who had been despatched to the lower world returns with the report that all the Athenians have gone *bird-mad*. Some more emigrants and visitors are disposed of, and then enters Prometheus disguised and concealed under an umbrella. He has come down on the sly to betray the starving and desperate condition of the gods, and his information is soon verified by the appearance of an embassy from heaven, consisting of Neptune, Hercules, and a certain barbarian divinity, one of the Triballi. The terms demanded by Pisthetærus are sufficiently exacting, no less than that Jupiter shall give up to the birds the sovereignty of the world, and to himself his favorite queen (*not* his wife, whom the Thunderer might have been too glad to get rid of) in marriage. Neptune is for going back *re infectâ*, but the premier of Cuckoocloudland, with an eye to the wellknown love of good cheer which characterizes the stage Hercules, has a savory banquet in preparation. The son of Alcmena is overcome by the order, he bullies the Triballian (who cannot speak plain Greek, and is altogether a very slow specimen of a divinity) into voting with him, the treaty is concluded, and the play ends with a grand apotheosis of Pisthetærus and his bride. It was put on the stage



without regard to expense, but only gained the second prize, probably from political reasons.

The *Birds* is very amusing throughout, and not so difficult as some of the other Aristophanic comedies. Professor Felton has, on the whole, performed his editorial task very well, as, indeed, might have been suspected from his previous success with the *Clouds*. Whatever diversity of opinion there may be as to his transactions with Æschylus, we have never heard it denied that he takes hold of Aristophanes in a workman-like manner. It is evidently a labor of love with him; he has a hearty sympathy with his author that carries him through triumphantly. The few observations we have to make refer generally to sins of omission rather than of commission. Thus we should have said something on v. 150; on *προσβιβὰ*, v. 425; on vv. 479, 817 (*πάνν γε*), 961, 989, 1140, 1396, 1663 (where Dindorf's suggestion, *εἰ μὴ βατίζει γ'* [= *ἀλλὰ βατίζει*], instead of the common reading, *βαδίζειν*, seems to us the only way of making anything like sense of the passage); and generally we think there is not sufficient explanation of the *proverbs* and the *parodies*, particularly as some of the translations and other parts of the notes are not absolutely necessary, and might easily be dispensed with if there was any fear of making the work too bulky. At the end of v. 537 there should be a comma between *ὑμῶν* and *αὐτῶν* (we entreat T. L. not to be angry, but we cannot afford to put a full stop to our points just yet, even for him; by the way, will he oblige us by observing that Professor Felton puts a full-sized comma between *καταγελάς μου* and *δῆλος εἶ*, v. 1393?), otherwise the position and construction of the latter word are ambiguous. On the contrary, the first comma in v. 771 should be omitted; as it now stands *κύκνοι* would be the vocative instead of the nominative. The professor's note on v. 543 is "*Ἐπ' ἐμοῦ, in any case, i. e. here, to my harm.*" This is a confusion of two different readings and renderings. Most of the editions have *ἐπ' ἐμοῦ, in my time*, opposed to *προγόνων παραδόντων* in the previous line; Bothe wishes to substitute *ἐπ' ἐμοῖ*, which reading the translation *to my harm* (or more literally *against me*) requires. But the old reading, with the old explanation, does not involve a solecism or anachronism, any more than the



very first sentence in Thucydides does; it is in accordance with a common Greek idiom, which, indeed, would be a bull in any modern language, but is perfectly good Attic nevertheless. *Κάμηλον ἀμύνον τιν'*, vv. 1544, 1545, we should translate *a camel by way of a lamb*, like Theocritus, Idyll. xiv. 17, *Βολβος τις κοχλίας ἐξηρέθη*, a shell-fish *was chosen by way of relish*. It is but fair to add, however, that *both* passages are much disputed.

There! we have finished our observations without saying much about *τοι*, or *γε*, or *πως*, or any of those particles which it is, indeed, a small thing for a scholar to understand, but which it is a still smaller thing (*pace* T. L. again) for one professing scholarship to be ignorant of. And, in concluding, we have one suggestion to offer to Professor Felton. Aristophanes may be very pleasantly and usefully illustrated from Athenæus. Mitchell has tried this, but his extracts were too wholesale and indiscriminate, and being unaccompanied by translations or explanations, their length and difficulty generally prevent the student from making much use of them. Judicious selections, *with translations attached*, embodied in the notes, would do much towards making Aristophanes more intelligible and more interesting to our collegians.

## THE 'WALTER MAPES' POEMS.\*

Knickerbocker, April 1850.

### FRIENDS AND READERS OF 'OLD KNICK':

LAST May I submitted to your notice a certain translation, promising at the same time to present you, in the very next number, with some observations explanatory of it, and of the collection of poems whence it was taken. But 'man proposes,' and it is otherwise disposed for him: since then I have been *terris jactatus*

\* The Latin Poems commonly attributed to WALTER MAPES. Collected and edited by THOMAS WRIGHT, Esq. London: printed for the Camden Society. 1841.



*et alto*, and moreover, so much mixed up in the *quidquid agunt homines*, that honest Walter and I have been strangers from that time to the present. Ten months! — it is a long while in Magazine history; almost long enough for the completion of a 'serial' romance; quite long enough for you to have forgotten PHILLIS and FLORA, even supposing you read their dispute. But I do not thus hold myself excused from my promise; especially since, if you *should* happen to have read the translation in question, that very slovenly version standing by itself must have given an unfair idea of the Oxford Archdeacon, which it is my duty to correct. Would that all mistakes of the pen could be as easily corrected!

It is a very pleasant thing for a quiet man, who has been knocking about in general society, to get back once more into his library; to feel *post tot naufragia*, if not *tutus*, at least *securus*; careless of what is going on out of doors; to live in a world of his own, far pleasanter than that with which he associates every day. An intelligent and highly accomplished friend of mine, who has a predilection for using long words without being particular about their meaning, is wont to call himself a *misogynist*, intending thereby to signify that he dislikes the majority of men. Now I don't call myself a misogynist, but I avow a strong preference for books. When it is remembered that you choose your companions not from your own little age and locality, but from all countries and all times; that you can be with them just when you please, and just as long as you please; that you can vary them at will; that there is no risk of your talking them out and exhausting their capacities; no fear of their boring you or your boring them; in view of all this, I really marvel that any man who has the education to enjoy, and the means to procure a library, can be tempted out into the world to seek amusement or relaxation, unless on the principle of D'Israeli's exquisite, who found good wine such a bore because he had it every where, and wanted a little bad, by way of change.

The above incipient flourish is not altogether due to Walter Mapes. I had many older and more valued friends — Greek, Latin and English classics — to shake hands with first, and then after a pleasant time with them, I bethought me of my promise to 'Old KNICK.'



and came down to the Archdeacon; who after all is not to be despised, for, though no remarkable poet, he was a stout satirist, and the school of verse which he founded valuably illustrates the popular movements in England during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Walter Mapes (the orthography of his name is uncertain: we find it written *Map*, *Mape*, *Mahan*, and *Mahapp*), was an ecclesiastic of Henry the Second's time, and a favorite with that monarch, from whom he received various preferments, ending with the Archdeaconry of Oxford. He had studied at Paris and travelled to Rome; was esteemed for his learning and celebrated for his wit. He died early in the thirteenth century. His satires on the clergy generally appear in manuscript under the name of *Golias* or *Golias Episcopus*, and even his friend and biographer *Giraldus Cambrensis* talks about this *Golias* as if it were the name of a real personage. But the appellation is so clearly a pseudonym, having reference to the *goliards*, or clerical buffoons of the time, that there is reason to suspect that this *mistake* of Giraldus, which much surprises our editor, was really *a mistake made on purpose*, and that prudential considerations induced him to ignore the real authorship of the satires. In the extract given by Mr. Wright from the *Speculum Ecclesiæ*, GIRALDUS quotes all the bitterest parts of the attack on the Romish Court (*Golias in Romanam Curiam*), just as a fashionable lady repeats a scandalous story: 'It's very shocking — I don't believe a word of it — very improper for people to invent such things — but here it is;' and the story, being much more spicy than the contradiction, goes deeper and travels farther. It is not till more than a century after that we find the best known of these poems, such as the *Apocalypsis*, the *Confessio*, and the *De Coniuge*, generally attributed to WALTERS MAPES. This popular opinion is supported by some slight internal evidence in the poems themselves, by the absence of contradiction, (for Giraldus may have been deceived himself, or, as we think more probable, have endeavored to deceive others,) and by the knowledge derived from Mapes' contemporaries, that he was of a satirical disposition, and lampooned the Cistercian Monks. But the original satires of Mapes gave rise to many imitations during the half century succeeding him, and it is not pos-



sible now to discriminate accurately between the productions of the master and those of his scholars.

The metre employed in these poems is chiefly of two kinds: one, the stanza of four (accentual) trochaic lines all rhyming; the other having properly neither rhyme nor assonance, but a correspondence of the unaccented syllables in the (accentual) dactylic terminations: E. G., the first stanza of the *Apocalypsis*:

'A TAURO torrida lampade *Cynthii*,  
Fundente jacula ferventis *radii*,  
Umbrosas nemoris latebras *adii*,  
Explorans gratiam lenis *Favonii*.'

As if we were to end four English lines with *unity*, *charity*, *jollity*, *density*. It is hardly necessary to observe that *quantity* has nothing to do with the versification of either metre.

There are a few specimens of different stanzas, some of them after the model of the monkish hymns, as the one *de Ruina Romæ*, which commences thus:

'PROPTER Syon non tacebo,  
Sed ruinas Romæ flebo  
Quousque justitia  
Rursus nobis oriatur,  
Et ut lampas accendatur  
Justus in ecclesia.'

The subject-matter of the poems is chiefly the corruption of the Romish church. Sometimes we find other topics introduced: a few of them discuss serious theological points: some are gross satirical attacks on the whole female sex. These libels were exceedingly common in the middle ages. *Nous avons changé tout cela*, and are become much more refined: witness the *Candle Lectures*. But the great majority have for their theme the vices and hypocrisy of the clergy, exposed sometimes with playful raillery, sometimes with ferocious invective. After the Reformation many of them were printed, and translated into French and English. The satire is carried out in a variety of ways, direct and indirect: here for instance is a burlesque anathema pronounced by Goliath on a thief:



'RAPTOR mei pilei morte moriatur,  
Mors sit subitanea nec provideatur,  
Et pœna continua post mortem sequatur,  
Nec campis Elysiis post Lethen fruatur.

'Raptor mei pilei sæva morte cadat,  
Illum febris, rabies et tabes invadat,  
Hunc de libro DOMINUS vitæ sanctæ radat,  
Hunc tormentis ÆACUS cruciandum tradat.

'Ei vita brevis sit pessimusque finis  
Nec vivat feliciter hinc diebus binis;  
Laceret hunc CERBERUS dentibus caninis,  
Laceratum gravius torqueat ERINYS.

'Nunquam diu bajulet illi colum CLOTO,  
Cesset filo LACHESIS tracto nondum toto,  
Filum rumpat ATROPOS, nec fruatur voto,  
Et miser presbytero corruat remoto.

'Excommunicatus sit in agro et tecto!  
Nullus eum videat lumine directo!  
Solus semper sedeat similis dejecto  
Hunc pœnis Tartareis cruciat ALECTO.

'Ille rebus omnibus quas habet emunctus  
Nec confessus occidat, oleo nec unctus,  
Morte subitanea palleat defunctus  
Judæ traditori sit inferno conjunctus.

'Hoc si quis audierit excommunicamen  
Et non observaverit præsulis examen,  
Nisi resipuerit corrigens peccamen  
Fuerit anathema! fiat, fiat. Amen!

Will the reader accept this version, in which the quadruple rhyme of the original is not attempted:

#### ARCHDEACON WALTER'S CURSE

##### ON THE MAN WHO STOLE HIS PURSE.

MAY the man who stole my purse perish in a twinkling,  
By a sudden death of which he shall have no inkling!  
After death immediately may he find damnation,  
Nor in fields Elysian get an habitation.



May the man who stole my purse die a very sad death!  
 Fever, madness, pestilence, every sort of bad death;  
 May his name be blotted from the book of life eternal.  
 Him may *ÆACUS*, the judge, doom to pains infernal.

May his life be very short and his end his warning;  
 May he not live happily through another morning!  
 With his fangs may *CERBERUS* lacerate and tear him.  
 May the *FURIES* with their snakes scourge and never spare him!

May not *CLOTHO* in his case long uphold life's distaff,  
*LACHESIS* before 'tis spun cease the thread to twist off;  
*ATROPOS* cut short the thread and his prayer deny him;  
 May he perish wretchedly, not a parson by him.

Out of doors and in the house may the curse be on him,  
 No one with propitious eye ever look upon him;  
 May he mourning sit alone, by his friends forsaken,  
 Till he dies — and then may he not preserve his bacon.

Spoiled of all his earthly goods, stripped of each possession,  
 May he die without extreme unction or confession.  
 When in short and shallow grave, his pale body laid is,  
 May his soul with *JUDAS* sit down in lowest Hades.

Whosoever heareth this excommunication,  
 And observeth not the priest's pious proclamation,  
 Unless he repent him in time for expiation,  
 May he be anathema and go to damnation!

A very fair sacerdotal anathema, is n't it? — not quite equal to that immortalized by *Tristram Shandy*, but still sufficiently catholic, comprehensive and terrible. The admixture of Pagan mythology is amusing: it was not uncommon in writings of the time.

In the *Apocalypsis Golix Episcopi*, which enjoyed great popularity during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the poet represents himself as carried up into heaven in a vision, where the vices of the popes and clergy are revealed. Parts of the Apocalypse and of *Ezekiel's* vision are closely imitated, the application being always made to the present state of the church. Thus he sees four beasts full of eyes, exactly corresponding to those seen by the prophet, and this explanation is given of them: the lion is the pope:



'EST leo Pontifex summus qui devorat,  
 Qui libras sitiens libros impignorat,  
 MARCUM respiciens, MARCUM dedecorat,  
 In summis navigans in nummis anchorat.'

The calf is the bishop, fattened on other men's goods; the eagle is the archdeacon, scenting the prey and flying to it from a great distance; the 'fourth beast with the face of a man' is the dean, full of craft, and working mischief under the mask of justice. They are full of eyes all round, because they look out for money from all quarters.

The *De Conjuge non Ducenda*, which was also very popular, is one of the scurrilous satires on women to which we have already alluded. But the most remarkable poem in the collection is the *Confessio Golias*, from which in the fifteenth or sixteenth century was extracted the so-called 'Drinking Song', by which the name of Walter Mapes is principally known in modern times. Yet it gave the archdeacon a bad reputation unjustly, as if he composed the lines for a bacchanalian ditty expressing his own sentiments, whereas they are put into the mouth of *Golias*, the representative of the shameless and dissolute priest, when he confesses (in a semi-exculpatory sort of way) his many misdeeds. 'Boiling inwardly with great anger, he will commune with himself in bitterness;'<sup>\*</sup> and then he goes on to bewail his inconstancy and his proneness to succumb to the three standard temptations of the enemy; wine, women, and gaming. One fancies those old ecclesiastics playing pretty deep for want of better occupation. We know that they invented back-gammon, which after all, however, is not a very fast kind of gambling, and they had no lack of valuables to stake. But *Golias* says very little about his passion for play, only that he is cold without and warm within when playing. and — what we should hardly expect — that he makes verses better for the excitement. Of the ladies he has more to say:

PRÆSUL, discretissime, veniam te precor  
 Morte bona morior, dulci nece necor;  
 Meum pectus sauciat puellarum decor  
 Et quas tactu nequeo, saltem corde mæchor.

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<sup>\*</sup> 'ÆSTUANS intrinsecus ira vehementi,  
 In amaritudine loquar meæ menti.'



'Res est arduissima vincere naturam  
In aspectu virginum mentem ferre puram;  
Iuvenes non possumus legem sequi duram  
Leviumque corporum non habere curam.

'Quis in igne positus igne non uratur?  
Quis in mundo demorans castus habeatur?  
Ubi VENUS iuvenes digito venatur  
Oculis illaqueat, facie prædatur.'

BISHOP, most discreet of men, hear me cry for quarter!  
Of a pleasant death I die, slain by a sweet slaughter.  
Every pretty woman's face melts my heart like water,  
Till I love — and fain would have — every mother's daughter.

Nature is to overcome harder than you reckon:  
Pure of heart 'tis hard to be when the damsels beckon;  
Youths like us so hard a yoke cannot put our neck on,  
And this flesh of ours, so frail, cannot keep a cheek on.

Who can in the fire be put so the fire won't burn him?  
Who that's living in the world can from beauty turn him?

The old common-place excuse of the sinner; but there is pretty writing in the above, however false the sentiment. The italicized line has always seemed to me very sweet and expressive. Still there is nothing in them equal to the rollicking verses afterward made into the drinking song, and so quaintly translated by Leigh Hunt. The author evidently understood, however much or little he may have sympathized with, the feelings of a jovial toper. Goliath knows himself to be more inspired by the bottle than by beauty or the dice-box. As he says:

'SUUM cuique proprium dat natura donum,  
Ego versus faciens vinum bibo bonum.'

NATURE giveth every man his own speciality;  
I, when writing verses, drink wine of the best quality.

The language of these poems is about equal to the current Latin of the period. Of course we find in them various barbarisms and slang words, and some queer spellings. *Effimera* for ἐφήμερα is curious, as showing that the Reuchlinian (modern Greek) pronunciation then prevailed. Words like *somnum damnnum* have always an epenthetical *p*, *sompnum*, *dampnum*. QU.: Did this come



in through the French pronunciation? \* The same letter somewhat similarly inserted in *Christopher* once mystified an etymologist not a little. Mr. Fox Talbot, a bold pursuer of mares' nest in the way of derivation, deduced the name from *Christ* — *opfer*, (German,) Christ's sacrifice. But this *p* has clearly no connection with the vowel of the preceding syllable, and only serves to modify the aspirate following it. Is not the Latin name older than the German word? I suspect so.

As to the style of the poems, it is very varied, at times coarse and familiar in the extreme, at times lofty and elegant. We occasionally meet with pretty bits of landscape and description. The *Phyllis* and *Flora* has several of these, and here is one from another poem:

'Hic est locus regius paradisi flore,  
Quem FLORA multiplici suo ditat rore  
Arborum quem CYBELE venustat honore,  
Qui IOVINO cœlitus fovetur odore.

'Hic resudat balsamus, hic myrta liquescit,  
Hic cypressus redolet, et palma frondescit,  
Fago nubunt ederae, coctanus pallescit  
Surgit gigas abies, populus albescit.

'Ulmas hic extenditur vitibus amica.  
PHILLIS flores parturit et DAPHNE pudica  
Lenta salix redolet et vana myrica,  
Late ramos explicat platanus iniqua.

'Rupes tenet hysopus, et papaver plana,  
Clivos montes edera et siler montana,  
Lillium suboccupat vallium arcana,  
Arida jusquiamus, narcissus fontana.'

One can tell easily enough whence this enumeration of trees comes. It is a direct classical imitation. Ovid first gave such a catalogue:

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\* It will be observed that the letter is not introduced *gratis euphoniae*, like the *p* in *Sampson* for *Sam's son*, or the *β* in many Greek contracts, for its presence is absolutely *invita euphonia*, we may say.



'NON CHAONIS abfuit arbos

Non nemus Heliadum non frontibus esculus altis,  
 Non tillæ molles, nec fagus et innuba laurus.  
 Et coryli fragiles, et fraxinus utilis hastis  
 Enodisque abies curvataque glandibus illex,  
 Et platanus genialis, acerque coloribus impar  
 Amnicolæque simul salices, et aquatica lotus  
 Perpetuoque virens buxus, tenuesque myricæ,  
 Et bicolor myrtus et baccis cærulea tinus.  
 Vos quoque flexipedes hederæ venistis et una  
 Pampinæ vites et amictæ vitibus ulmi;  
 Ornique et piceæ pomoque onerata rubenti  
 Arbutus, et lentæ victoris præmia palmæ;  
 Et succincta comas hirsutaque vertice pinus;

Adfuit huic turbæ metas imitata expressus.' *Met.* X. 90.

That was when Orpheus played to the woods. Parallel passages are to be found in Seneca and Statius, but the best imitation is Spenser's:

'THE sailing pine, the cedar proud and tall,  
 The vine-prop elme, the poplar never dry,  
 The bullder oak, sole king of forests all,  
 The aspen good for staves, the cypress funeral.

'The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors,  
 And poets sage, the fir that weepeth still,  
 The willow, worn of forlorn paramours,  
 The yew, obedient to the bender's will,  
 The birch for shafts, the sallow for the mill,  
 The myrrh sweet blending in the bitter wound,  
 The warlike beech, the ash for nothing ill,  
 The fruitful olive and the platane round,  
 The carver holme, the maple, seldom inward sound.'

*Fairy Queen, Book I. l. 8.*

In some respects Spenser has improved on his original fitted off each tree with its appropriate epithet, which Ovid has not done in every case. But some of Ovid's adjectives are very happy: the 'cone-like cypress,' the 'virgin laurel,' (so called from Daphne,) the 'stream-cherishing willows,' the 'winding-footed ivy.

Returning from this digression, it remains for us to speak of the poem *Phyllis and Flora*. It is the last in Mr. Wright's collection, and probably the latest in date; at any rate, it is not attributed to Mapes in the



MSS., and seems to belong to a subsequent era. It belongs to a class of poems, which, beginning as early as the tenth century with the Anglo-Saxon versifiers, were first transferred to rhyming Latin by Mapes and his contemporaries, and continued long after them, becoming especially popular in France under the title of *Débats*. They are indeed debates or discussions between two parties, who are sometimes mere personifications, as *wine* and *water*, the *body* and the *soul*; sometimes real mortals of different classes or opinions. Two 'amorous ladies,' one admiring a soldier and the other a scholar, hold a contention 'which one's lover loveth most,' and ultimately refer the matter to Cupid himself, who decides in favor of the scholar; for so we must translate *clericus*, his position being much like that of an English college Fellow, well supplied with the desirabilities of life, a lover of learning and good cheer, and having little to do with preaching and other peculiar functions of a modern priest or clergyman. The poem, which probably dates nearly as late as 1300, was very popular in the sixteenth century. It is comprised in some continental collections, and we learn from Ritson that George Chapman translated it into English in 1595. His version would be worth having, but Mr. Wright was not able to find a copy, and therefore it is not likely that any of us ever will.

Although the aspect of the poem is perfectly serious, I have sometimes thought there was a latent satire intended in it. The reasons which Flora gives for preferring her scholar love are mostly of a very mercenary character, and his own learning is rather thrown into the background compared with his wealth and luxury. If the vow of celibacy had been strictly observed by the clergy in those days, the very argument of the piece and the final decision, 'that the scholar is by far the most ardent lover,' would be a bitter satire in itself. But we know that numbers of the English priests were virtually married: these left-handed marriages were formally condemned in council in 1215, but the papal ordinances on the subject were enforced with difficulty. Several of the poems in this collection, written immediately after Mapes's time, handle the question with great boldness, and display much good sense and sound protestant doctrine.

Feb. 18th.

CARL BENSON.



## PROFESSOR LINCOLN'S HORACE.\*

Literary World, April 1851.

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WE are somewhat inclined to question the demand or necessity for a new edition of Horace. Our doubt has no reference to foreign labors in this field. With a nationality much to be desiderated in some other matters connected with literature, the college-going and college-teaching part of our community has invariably hesitated to receive into general use the work of a European scholar until it receives the *imprimatur* of a native editor. The American classical editor, therefore, has only to take into consideration home competitors, and these in the present instance, we think, have already pretty well occupied the ground, and the labors of some of them have acquired a reputation not limited to their section of the country or to the country itself. We are disposed to think that, without going out of the beaten track, any of our professors having leisure and inclination to edit might find something more left to be done in Virgil than in Horace; but how we *do* wish that some of them would make the attempt to enlarge a little the boundaries of our very limited collegiate Latin course! For instance, how many American students know anything about Lucretius? Yet is he not, whether considered in a literary or a philological point of view, quite as worthy to be read as Ovid? A move of this kind can only be made by our Professors; not merely is it their peculiar business, but they are the *only* persons by whom it can be done, because first, there are very few men out of their circle qualified for the work; secondly, where such a *rara avis* as a scholar of leisure exists, the very fact of his not being connected with any institution of learning, prevents him from introducing a book into the standard

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\* The Works of Horace. With English Notes for the use of Schools and Colleges. By J. B. Lincoln, Professor of the Latin Language and Literature in Brown University. New York: Appleton & Co.



course anywhere. The classical editor here must have some large school or college as a stand-point to begin with.

Since, however, Professor Lincoln has, by reasons best known to himself, been led to the conclusion that another edition of Horace was required, it is but bare justice to him to say that he has executed the task in a very workmanlike manner. The book itself is quite a treat to one's eyes after the usual run of American school-books — large and correct print, handsome type, and a liberal allowance of margin; and it is further embellished with occasional vignettes, though of these we must be allowed to say, that neither their beauty, number, nor importance altogether justifies the flourish of trumpets made about them in the preface. The foot-notes of various readings are very convenient, and contribute to give the work a scholarly appearance; we respect an editor who has the courage to give various readings. The critical notes are good *so far as they go*, good enough to make us wish for more. Unluckily, this question of more or fewer notes has become almost a party one between New York and New England professors, the former, as a general rule, taking the side of more copious, the latter of more scanty illustration; so that it is not easy to approach the subject without being suspected of, perhaps without being imperceptibly biased by, some feeling of partisanship.

The obvious argument against the profuse annotation system (a system more favored in Germany than in England: we mention this fact because it has been our fortune to find an opinion to the contrary strangely prevalent in some quarters) is that it makes the learner depend too much on his notes and not enough on his lexicon and himself. There is a subordinate reason arising from considerations of convenience and expense — the addition which many notes make to the bulk and cost of a volume. As regards this latter, we should begin where there is any danger of making too big a book, by throwing out all parallel passages from modern poets and all from ancient poets when introduced to illustrate the sentiment only, such quotations, like pictorial illustrations, seeming to us not *strictly* in place in a critical edition. We are inclined also to admit that the practice of giving translations in the notes merely to show how a sentence or



phrase may be put into the best English, has been sometimes carried to excess. For the student to understand the meaning of a passage is but half the battle; he should labor to express it in elegant as well as accurate terms, thus bringing into play and improving his knowledge of his own language.\* At the same time it must be said that the eastern students who are left to exercise themselves in this way do not appear to profit much by the opportunity. The first thing that strikes a New York trained boy at a New England college is the barbarous style of construing adopted by most of his classmates, which, aiming at bald literalness, errs as much from real accuracy as the elegant but loose paraphrases to which he has been accustomed. A proper style of translation, however, is much better learned from the teacher than from a book; but here again it happens unfortunately that a great many of our teachers are not over qualified for this task. Indeed, the American editor of a school or college text-book must always bear in mind this deficiency of the average teachers. Still, all things considered, we advocate a sparing use of notes which translate merely for the sake of the language, but with notes which explain grammatical difficulties and verbal niceties, the case is different: *we never saw too many of them in an American classic*. The most common error of a student working by himself — and we speak not of mere tyros, but of those who have made considerable progress — is to *overlook the existence of difficulties*, to get a general idea of the meaning of passage without being able to explain the construction and the force of particular words accurately. Now, as we have already said, many of our students have to work alone, and many with inferior teachers. Moreover, the chances of this error are greatly multiplied by the character of the national mind; where there is one American boy deficient in sharpness and quickness of apprehension, there are fifty deficient in habits of patient investigation and accurate discrimination. Take a subtle Greek author — Sophocles for instance; examine a student who has read him alone or under an

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\* *Writing out translations is a valuable exercise not sufficiently attended to in any of our academic institutions. It is the best possible preparation for English composition, and would be an advantageous substitute for it in the earlier stages of the College course.*



incompetent tutor; he will give you a fair outline of the general meaning, but when you come to question him closely, *why is this particular word used here? what would this construction be in ordinary Greek? why does this collocation of words mean so and so when it usually means something else?* he cannot go on for two lines without stumbling. Now, of course we do not mean to compare Horace with Sophocles for difficulty; yet there are many latent niceties (*dodges* and *catches* as they would be called in Cantab slang) all through the Odes, and the very fact that they have the reputation with most students of being easy is the strongest argument in support of our position. The Satires, on the contrary, are considered hard, and it is just for this reason — because their difficulties are appreciated — that our students on the whole know them better than any portion of any author read in our colleges.

We did not intend to make any particular remarks on individual notes in this work; but a single one which has struck our eye we cannot forbear commenting on briefly. At v. 6 of the *Epistle to the Pisos* (usually known as the *Ars Poetica*), Prof. Lincoln says "*isti tabulæ*. Such a picture as that: *isti expresses contempt*." We do not believe that *iste* in classical Latin ever expresses anything of the sort. There was a dictum of the old grammarians to that effect; and it is because it was one of the things particularly impressed upon us at school, and because we not only read but wrote a good deal of Latin before discovering the error, that we are anxious to correct it in others whenever the opportunity presents itself. *Iste* (still represented by *ese* in Spanish and *cotesti* in Italian) is the demonstrative pronoun referring to the second person, as *hic* refers to the first person and *ille* to the third; *hic*, this by me, *iste*, this or that by you, this of yours; *ille*, that (at a distance from both of us). The idea of implied contempt probably originated thus; in an advocate's speech, *iste*, your man, would be the term naturally applied to the client of the opposite counsel, and as "your man" was pretty sure to be well abused before the speech was through, grammarians fancied that the word had a bad sense and denoted a contemptible object in itself. So far all is tolerably plain sailing; but besides this there is a secondary and loose use of *iste* to denote a subject



of previous conversation or allusion; *this that we have been talking about* (we might construe *this between us*, to carry out the *locative* discrimination between the meanings of the pronouns) as in the passage before us, *isti tabulae*, *this imaginary picture that I have been telling you about*, or in one word, *such a picture*. If it be asked why the word may not *also* express contempt here, since the imaginary picture is certainly ridiculous and contemptible enough, we answer simply because *iste* is found in other places referring to antecedents anything but contemptible. Thus in our very author, Epist. I. 6. 67: "*Si quid noviati rectius istis, Candidus imperti, si non his utere mecum;*" where Horace cannot mean to throw contempt on his own precepts, while he is challenging his reader to produce any better ones. So also Cicero in *Catil.* I. 9: "*Utinam tibi isiam mentem dii immortales duint.*" *Would that the immortals could give you such a disposition* (to go into exile).

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## LATIN PRONUNCIATION.\*

Literary World, July 1851.

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THE little pamphlet with this long title is really *multum in parvo* — one of those books that suggests the perpetration of an article on it longer than the work itself. Professing to be merely a guide to scientific students who are not scholars, it opens out into a discussion of all the doubtful questions in Greek and Latin pronunciation. These questions cannot fail to be of interest to every scholar, particularly an English or American one, on account of the greater damage which the learned languages suffer in being subjected to the pronunciation of ours. Our difference from and inferiority

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\* Elements of Latin Pronunciation, for the Use of Students in Law, Medicine, Zoology, Botany, and the Sciences generally, in which Latin words are used. By S. S. Haldeman, A. M., Professor of Natural History in the University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia: Lipincott, Grambo & Co.



to the continental nations of Europe in this respect arises, not so much from the *consonants* — *tazé*, *taché*, and *tathé* are probably as great variations from the original sound of *tace* as *tasé* is — but from the continually recurring vowels *a*, *i*, *u*. It is not probable, however that the English will ever alter their habit of pronunciation, although it renders their attempts at conversing in Latin with German or Italian scholars difficult and ludicrous. In this country, where scholarship is more limited and more in its infancy, any attempt at such change might be more likely to succeed. Indeed it has partially succeeded in New York, where we have adopted a pronunciation of Latin and Greek nearly approaching the German; but the New Englanders still retain the English powers of the letters, with the additional ornament of as many false quantities as possible. Still it is not probable that even we shall generally adopt a new standard of classical pronunciation, because it is difficult to ascertain satisfactorily what the real standard was, for many reasons.

*First*, there are the natural caprices of language. Suppose the French should cease to be a living tongue, by what analogy or parity of reasoning from the other European languages should we be likely to arrive at its true pronunciation? If several files of the *Charivari* and other comic publications remained, the puns and rebuses might help us to find out some of its peculiarities, such as that it has more than a dozen combinations of letters to represent the simple sound of long *o*, but others, such as the pronunciation of the diphthong *oi*, we should never be likely to hit — unless indeed we found in some English, German, or Italian author, French words written according to their sound in those languages — and even not then with perfect accuracy, by reason of,

*Secondly*, the uncertainty with which sounds are rendered from one language to another. The Romans, we are expressly told by themselves, had no sound corresponding to the Greek *upsilon* and were obliged to invent a character for it; neither English, Spanish, nor Italian have a sound corresponding to the French *u*. German teachers and German grammars will tell you that their *ö* is equivalent to the French *œu* and their *ü* to the French *u*, which is contrary to the experience of every man's ears who has heard the two languages spoken



constantly, and also to the fact that such rhymes as *schön* and *gehn*, *blick* and *zurück* occur continually in the best German poets, whereas no Frenchman would think of rhyming *cœur* with *amer* or *dure* with *pire*. The Greek diphthong *ei*, though generally expressed in Latin, by *i*, was in some well known words, as *Medea*, expressed by *e*, but this may have been owing to another cause, which brings us to,

*Thirdly*, the variableness of pronunciation in different parts of the same country, and by different people. In France and England there is but one standard, but equally well educated men in different parts of Germany will pronounce the past participle of the verb *geben*, *ghegayben*, *yegayben*, and *yeyayben*. The instability of some of the Greek diphthongs, particularly those of the long vowels with *i* subscript, seems the only hypothesis capable of accounting for the contradictory modes in which they are expressed.

*Fourthly*, we have the difference of opinion among individuals themselves as to what sounds are different and what identical, what long and what short, what long and short sounds correlative. Thus Mr. Haldeman seems to consider the French *u* and German *ü* precisely equivalent to each, which we consider a want of discrimination. On the other hand, if asked the quantity of the vowel in *art*, we should say it was long like that of *arm*, for which he would reprehend us. And many people still maintain the (in our opinion) traditional infatuation of English lexicographers, that *ai* and long *a* have a different sound, e. g. that *fair* and *fare* are distinguishable in pronunciation. The great confusion of vowel and diphthong sounds, as well as of correlative short and long sounds, tends to destroy our accuracy of ear in this respect.\*

*Fifthly*, limited knowledge and the imperfect generalization consequently made from once or a few languages,

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\* In English two of the vowels (I U) have diphthongal power, one vowel (the continental U) can only be represented by a diphthong (*oo*) and the ordinary long and short powers of *every vowel* belong to two different letters or a letter and a diphthong. Thus *a* in *father* and *a* in *fate* are the *a* and *e* of most languages, and so on throughout; in no one case is the short power of a vowel the sound of its long power shortened, or the short correlative of its long sound.



constitute a formidable impediment and source of error. When we are discussing what a sound ought to be or how one sound should fall into another on general principles of speech, it requires a most extensive knowledge of different languages to justify a dogmatic assertion of what those principles are. We have often seen and heard advanced in support of the uniformly hard pronunciation of *C* and *G* in Latin, the artifices used in the modern continental languages to preserve unchanged the sound of the radical consonant (e. g. *manger* makes *mangeons* not *mangons* in the first person plural, *rico* makes *riquissimo*, not *ricissimo* in the superlative) and the absence of any such artifice in the ancient tongues. But this rule does not hold in the language most immediately descended from the Latin; it requires no more than a fashionable operagoer's knowledge of Italian to observe that *amico* makes not *amichi* but *amici* in the plural. Mind, we are not arguing against the uniform pronunciation of the Latin *C* and *G* — indeed the correspondence of the former to the Greek  $\kappa$  is a sufficient proof in *its* case at least — but only remarking that the analogy so often advanced to support it is imperfect and defective. And Mr. Halderman quotes a ludicrous instance of a man's English associations misleading him, in Bonnycastle's argument that the Latin *v* could not have been pronounced like *w*, because it is vulgar to say *winegar* in English!

The result of these difficulties (and we are not sure that we have enumerated all the difficulties of the case) is that it is not possible to determine satisfactorily the pronunciation of all the Latin letters so as to form a complete system which philologists will generally agree to. In the case of some letters we can attain to absolute certainty; in the case of others, after all our speculations, we are left in absolute uncertainty; and there are various shades of probability between. Sometimes having decided one letter we can by means of it decide another with all the neatness and accuracy of a mathematical demonstration. The comparison of *tu-tu* to the cry of the screech-owl, the agreement of most modern languages in their pronunciation of *u* and its Greek equivalent *ov*, the absence of any contradictory evidence from any source, all unite to justify us in assuming that the Roman sound of this letter was our *oo*. Going a little further we find



that *u* and *v* were interchanged and stood in the relation of vowel and consonant; comparisons among other languages show us that *v* is the consonant sound of *oo* (as exemplified in the identical sound of the French word *oui* and the English word *we*). We see that such a poetic form as *silua* is immediately and naturally explained by pronouncing the original word *silwa* — and the result of these and many similar observations is a conviction that the Roman *v* was pronounced like our *w*.

Sometimes we have a probability, as that the Roman diphthong *æ* was pronounced like our *ee*, which is inferred from the relations of its Greek equivalent *oi*, which represents long *e* in the heroic genitive form *οιο*, lengthened expression for *εο*, and is found closely connected with the same sound in such changes as *οἶδα* from *ἴδον*. But this probability cannot be so far confirmed as to exclude the possible correctness of other hypotheses.

Sometimes we are divided between a nearly equal balance of authorities and probabilities, so that not only no certain but no probable conclusion can be arrived at. Such is the case with the Roman *E* (connected with and involving the whole question of *Elacism* and *Iotacism*, otherwise called the Erasmian and Reuchlinian controversy, in regard to Greek pronunciation), the diphthong *YI* and the aspirates. In some of these the Greek correspondence give us no assistance whatever, any more than we could obtain information of the values of *y* and *x* out of the single equation  $y=x$ .

The above somewhat desultory remarks, suggested by a mere glance at the general plan of Mr. Haldeman's book, may give some hint of the wide field it opens. To go into it in detail is not our intention; we have neither time nor space. Occasionally in grappling with a subject of so great extent, and seeking to pack down his results as closely as possible, he has, we fear, exemplified the "*dum brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio*;" in other places, *e. g.* his illustrations to prove that the Greek  $\Sigma$  was *sd* not *ds*, he is very lucid and satisfactory. There are a few peculiarities of his system which demand special notice. Into these parts and these only of his work shall we enter minutely.

He considers — that is, if we understand him correctly, which we are not quite sure of, for the paragraph



is somewhat ambiguously expressed — that the Greek  $\varphi$  was an aspirated English *w*. Now, in the first place it has always been agreed that  $\varphi$  (whatever its sound may be) was cognate to  $\pi$ , and it seems rather inconsistent to take away an aspirate from a tenuis existing in the language, leave it without any, and give the aspirate to a tenuis not existing in the language since the disappearance of the digumma and only represented by the vowel sound *ov*. Secondly, the combinations brought about by such a pronunciation would be most unharmless; *hwratria* ( $\varphi\varphi\alpha\tau\rho\iota\alpha$ ) for instance. To be sure there are some puzzling arrangements of consonants in Greek; why  $\vartheta\mu$  in Iambic verse should be *permissive* (i. e. admit a short vowel before it) and  $\sigma\mu$  not, when according to our organ of hearing and articulation *sm* can go together in one syllable much better than *thm*; or why in any verse a proper name like *Daphnis* should be a Pyrrhic rather than a Trochee, so that we must separate the syllables *Da-phnis* and not *Daph-nis* — these are mysteries to us; but there is one consideration that settles the question to our mind. The combination *hwr* induces a vowel before the *r* — thus *hwratria* would come to be pronounced *hwiratria*. Now it was precisely to avoid a similar occurrence that the Greeks inserted letters in words like  $\alpha\upsilon\delta\omicron\rho\iota$  and  $\mu\epsilon\sigma\sigma\mu\beta\omicron\lambda\alpha$ ; and we are therefore justified in concluding positively that such a combination as *hwr* in contrary to the genius of the Greek language.

Donaldson's idea that  $\varphi$  had the sound of *p* followed by an aspirate as in the English word *haphazard* is rightly rejected by our author. Mr. D. fortifies himself with the reduplications (e. g.  $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\varphi\upsilon\kappa\alpha$ ) and contacts like  $\Sigma\alpha\pi\varphi\acute{\omega}$ . The former do not make for his theory any more than for the usual one, and the latter go dead against it, for our *p* with an aspirate after it is hard enough to pronounce, and *hvo* would be next to impossible. In answer to another theory of Donaldson's that "the Latin *F* must have contained a guttural element," he cites the change from *F* and *S* to *H* mentioned in the *American Journal of Science* as a peculiarity of Hawaiian and Tahitian languages compared with the Polynesian standard. This is equal to Mr. Donaldson himself, who will always be talking about *visarga* or *anusvarah* instead of *apocope* or *ecthlipsis* to astonish us poor fellows who are badly off



for Sanscrit. There was no use of going so far out of the way to get an illustration. Any father of a family may find it in his own nursery. It is the most ordinary thing for children before they can speak plain to use the aspirate instead of F in beginning a word, to say *honey* for *funny*, &c. They also frequently substitute the aspirate for initial S; the converse of which is seen in *ἄλς sal*, *ῥλῆ silva*, and the like. H is capable of being articulated before S or F can be, and when the organs are imperfect as in infancy or the ruder stages of society, it is used for what afterwards becomes *s* or *f*. The Barbarians of the Spanish provinces recorruped F into H, and it still remains as their written language, e. g. *fario*, Spanish *hacer*, &c., though the *H* is no longer sounded.

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## THE AJAX OF SOPHOKLES.\*

Literary World, October 1851.

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IT may be unpatriotic, but it certainly is very true, to say that the man in this country who writes a book on a strictly classical subject (unless he be a College Professor, in which case he may induce his pupils to buy it) must make up his mind beforehand to pay his own expenses, and be moreover content with a very limited circle of readers. The English gentleman who compiled this convenient and useful edition of a magnificent play to which most of our students are strangers, has, thanks to his being a foreigner, come out of the affair better than a native would probably have done. Harvard found him a publisher, on the whole he may congratulate himself on having escaped so well.

Such books are not read because there are not men educated to read them — men who can either comprehend readily or take interest heartily in their subject. A young

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\* The *Atias* (*Ajax*) of Sophocles, with Critical and Explanatory Notes. Cambridge: John Bartlett. 1851.



man in one of our great cities, with a family sufficiently wealthy to support him at the best college in the land, is clapped into a counting-house at fifteen and chained there for seven years. His work is office drudgery, his enjoyments and solaces of the earth, earthy. The *Sewer*, the *Jacobin*, and the *Inexpressible* comprise the extent of his literary researches. *Derby* and *Pacalín* are his oracles, any space which they leave in his ideas being filled up by Saracco. Delmonico suppers are his positive, a 2', 45" horse his comparative, a share in a yacht his superlative of earthly bliss. Such a man, even should he become opulent at an early period of life, can never be expected to cultivate an acquaintance with the *Literæ Humaniores*. It is very doubtful if he has the power, and pretty certain that he will not have the inclination to do so. An ambitious country youth is fond of books, goes to college and acquires a reputation there. He is likely to do good in the church, to shine at the bar: perhaps has visions of senatorial dignity. Alas! because facility in composition and public speaking are to be of use to him in his future career, *therefore* he will do nothing but speak and write from the start, before he has learned to read or think. What classics he deigns to acquire are at most a college Appointment's worth — possibly not even that — perhaps just enough to furnish him with an occasional hacknied quotation — decidedly not enough to render the classical element a conspicuous one in his thoughts, studies, and tastes. When intelligent foreigners complain of our *want of refinement*, it is this sort of refinement they mean — the critical and æsthetic sympathies of educated literary men and well-read gentlemen, not the refinement of dresses and dinners, French clothes and French dances, of which we denizens of the Atlantic cities have enough and somewhat too much.

Shockingly aristocratic and monarchical and un-American these remarks of ours! At least there will be plenty of charitable people to say so, for our popular mind has grown "tender and irritable," like that of the decadent democracy described by Plato; even as a spoiled child or a spoiled woman, it will be found fault with in nothing. You can't say a word about Bruin the nigger-dealer, or Grabster of the Bath Hotel, or the *Morning Sewer*, but some one will raise the hue and cry after you



as an enemy of "our free institutions." O blatant individual, are Bruin and Grabster and *the Sewer* integral parts of our government and institutions? If so, then have we institutions not altogether perfect, but imperatively demanding somewhat of reform. But we trust that they — two of them at least — are not institutions at all, but monstrous excrescences to be lopped off from the body social and sent to their own place.

Indignant democrat, thou hast a friend or a brother perhaps, a good man and clever, respected and loved by thee above all other men. Wouldst thou, therefore, insist that *everything* about him shall be deemed perfect by all the world — praise his snub nose, for instance, as an aquiline, and quarrel with all who shall not confess it the purest Roman? If so, thou art very blind or a sad toady. Go, take a lesson from John Bull, whose sauciness thou art wont to wax wroth with, forgetting that he is just as saucy at home. John is a patriot every inch of him, and thinks enough — yea, quite enough — of himself and his country; yet is he not slow to revile and ridicule the abuses thereof. Can we expect him to be more civil to us than he is to his own people? When *the Times* compares Lords Brougham and Campbell to a couple of Scotch terriers, is it surprising that it should speak with small respect of Senator Seward or Editor Greeley? Thackeray wrote a book on English snobs and showed up a great many of the "institutions" of his fatherland in very large type. We think we see him writing a book about the Snobs of America and some of the said snobs reading it.

But all this while we are keeping you away from our play. Draw up the curtain then — or rather let it down, for the classic curtain did not rise from the stage, but sank beneath it. The contest for the arms of Achilles is decided. The judges have given them to the eloquent man in preference to the brave man. Disappointment drives the defeated candidate mad; he rushes out on the sheep and cattle of the army and slaughters them instead of the Grecian chiefs. Ulysses will play the spy on his unfortunate rival, and here the drama opens.

The wily son of Laertes encounters his patron goddess near the tent of Ajax. And here let us make a note. The uninterrupted stateliness of the classical drama, its



exclusion of vulgar persons, low words, undignified ideas, are often complacently dwelt on by those who are not inclined to over admiration of the romantic school. Now, of the *pseudo* classic drama, as we have it in Racine and Alfieri, this may be true enough, *but it certainly is not true of the old Greek drama*. There is in it a great deal of the comic or semi-comic directly or indirectly developed by the inferior characters. Æschylus is sufficiently prone to magniloquence, yet with all his *ρήμαθ' ὑπὸ κράτιστα*, he makes the female attendant in the *Choephoræ* talk about some very ordinary operations of life, and there are clearly comic points in the Guard's prologue to the Agamemnon. The whole run of Euripides' *Alcestis* — Hercules kicking up a row in the house, the supremely farcical idea of Admetus slanging his father for not offering to die instead of him, and so forth — might furnish us with a still stronger case, were it not now generally agreed among scholars that the *Alcestis* was not a tragedy at all, but a species of genteel comedy. In this very play Ulysses makes some fun. First of all he is afraid of Ajax: "What are you about, Minerva? For God's sake don't bring him out!" And then when she taunts him for his cowardice, he tries to look big and declares that "he would not have stood out of Ajax's way even when he was in his right mind." Far enough out of it now is the poor son of Telamon, killing and torturing sheep whom he takes for the *Atridae* and Ulysses. The goddess and her protégé retire, and the chorus (of sailors from Salamis) advance, bewailing the calamity of their chief, and seeking to investigate further the truth of the reports respecting him. Forth comes to them Tecmessa, the captive but loving mistress of Ajax. From her they learn their lord's condition. The frantic fit has left him; he sits fallen among the fallen carcasses, in a state of despondency still worse than his former phrensy. Even as she speaks the inner doors are opened (*ἀνοίχεται ἡ σκηνή*) and the hero is seen in his tent surrounded by the slaughtered cattle. He advances; almost his first words are a prayer for death: "You are my only friends, therefore kill me." The chorus is bewildered — after the usual manner of Greek choruses — they "neither know how to stop him or how to let him go on." He will not be comforted; his fortune is now in accordance with his



name (*Αἴας*), he may now cry *αἶ* (alas!) many times. Every one hates him. Shall he go home over the Ægean sea? No, he cannot bear to behold the face of his father, Telamon. Shall he rush upon the Trojan fortifications and die fighting! No, thus he might please the Atridæ. He will do something desperate. (In this speech we note another community of conceit between the classic and romantic drama — the verbal quibble, the use of the *paronomasia*, or in plain English, *the pun*. So in the Agamemnon Helen is called *ἐλάνδρος, ἐλέπτολιε*, a *hell of men and cities*, as it has been translated.) Tecmessa interposes. Long since deprived of a home and a father, her safety has been bound up in that of her conqueror; she begs him not to expose her and their child unprotected to the insults of enemies. He persists in taking leave of the infant, Eurysaces, whom he commends to the seamen; at length, however, the entreaties of the captive princess seem to move him; in beautifully flowing verse (would that we could translate it better!) he expresses his change of purpose: —

The long immeasurable lapse of time  
Brings forth all hidden things, conceals all known.  
What may not be expected when we see  
The fearful oath, the hardened mind o'ercome.  
Yea, I, on direful deed so stern resolved  
Am softened down, like iron dipped in oil,  
E'en by this woman; pitying her too much  
To leave her widowed, with an orphan boy  
Among our enemies. Nay, I will go  
To bathe me at the meadows by the shore,  
That I, from blood-pollutions purified,  
May 'scape the goddess's oppressive wrath.  
And having found an unfrequented place,  
There will I hide my sword, accurséd arm,  
Buried in earth where none may see it more;  
For since I first received within my grasp  
This gift of Hector, foeman bitterest,  
The Greeks have never showed me any good.  
So true the proverb is that men repeat,  
"Foes' gifts are no gifts and they profit not."  
And we shall know henceforth to yield to Gods,  
And we shall learn henceforth to reverence kings.  
*They* are the rulers, so we must submit.



For things prodigious, yea, and mightiest,  
 Submit to dignities. The winter snows,  
 Hard-trodden, yield to fertile summer's heat;  
 The melancholy night withdraws her steps  
 Before the blazing coursers of the day.  
 The breath of storms terrific leaves the deep,  
 And all-o'erpowering sleep releases those  
 Whom he has bound nor alway holds them fast,  
 And how shall we not learn discretion too?

The chorus, overjoyed at the change, invoke the presence of Pan and Apollo to kallow their raptures: —

I thrill with delight like the shudder of love,  
 I am borne up with joy to the regions above.

O Pan, Pan, come hither to me!

Wandering over the sea,\*

From the snow-smitten cliffs of Cyllene advance!

O King that rulest the heavenly quires;

And join in the measure thy wisdom inspires,

The Nysian and Cnosian dance.

For now 'tis my pleasure to sport in that measure,

And come thou too with willing mind

Ever to me propitiously inclined,

O royal Apollo, thy favor make known,

Who holdest the Delian isle for thine own;

O'er the Icarian sea

Hasten to me!

But their joy is destined to have a speedy and bitter termination: Ajax was deceiving them; and while they are thus singing for delight, and a messenger is telling them how all the army have abused Teucer on his brother's account, and how Calchas the soothsayer has expressly commanded that Ajax should be kept in his tent *during this day*, on which he was especially exposed to the wrath of Pallas, the unhappy man, bent on self-destruction, has found a retired spot for the deed. Here note that there is an indubitable *change of scene*. The *Unity of Place* is utterly set at naught. We see Ajax *in a wood*, preparing to fall on his sword. It cannot fail to do its work — the sword of his most hated enemy, Hector, fixed in the hostile earth of Troy. He prays for an

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\* See our note further on, upon ἀλίπλαγκτε.



easy death, and that Teucer may find his corpse. He invokes the avenging furies upon the whole Grecian army. He bids the sun announce his fate to his aged parents. Of the light of day, of his own country of Salamis, and the country of Troy he takes farewell. These are his latest words. The rest he will tell to those in Hades.

And here by rights, according to our own modern notions, the play should terminate. When Ajax has fallen on his sword the main action is over. But the play does not terminate for several hundred lines — *it being a peculiarity of the Classic Drama that the action is apt to be redundant*, and to be continued beyond the main catastrophe. This redundancy did not begin with the Greek Drama; it is equally conspicuous in the Greek Epic. Both the Iliad and Odyssey go on beyond the winding up of their main interest. The one seems naturally to end with the death of Hector, the other with the revelation of Ulysses and the slaughter of the suitors. The old German epic of the *Nibelungen Lied* appears to preserve the unity of action better. There is extensive work in prospect for the undertaker, but the poet does not busy himself with anticipating that; when his leading personages are all killed off he leaves them, and pretends to say no more.

I really cannot tell you what after that befel;

The princes all were weeping, the women, too as well;

Likewise the noble burghers for friends beloved indeed.

Here hath my tale an end; this is the Nibelungen's need. Hence much doubt and confusion; squabbling of commentators, and violent apocope committed on the father of poetry by the sons of criticism, much whereof might have been prevented by observing this peculiarity of the Greek mind. And we will not say that *none* of the commentators have done so — for truly their name is legion; there is nothing which more truly illustrates the *ars longa vita brevis* than this Homeric controversy in its various forms — but we have never met with any who had recourse to this explanation. When we come to the tragedies it might be suggested that their arrangement into *trilogies* caused the redundancy, for purposes of connexion; but this supposition would not fully account for the fact. If the *Agamemnon*, *Choephoræ*, and *Eumenides* were rewritten now-a-days, the terminations of the first two,



if not of all, would doubtless be materially curtailed. Take the greatest dramatic poem written in the English language since Shakspeare — Henry Taylor's *Philip Van Artevelde* — the first part ends with the hero's triumph, the second with his death; there is no appendix to either. In the *Comedies* we may sometimes discover another reason — the *peripetia* or dramatic irony showing the unsatisfactoriness of the object gained in the plot; thus in the *Wasps*, when Philocleon is induced to relinquish his pettifogging and electioneering habits, the action of the original plot is complete, but the satirist proceeds to show him behaving worse, and giving more trouble in his character of a fashionable gentleman, than in his old one of a politician. But in the tragedies this superfluity can only be explained by supposing the Greek formula of dramatic action a very different one from that of the moderns. Grote's comparison (in reference to the early myths and legends) of the Greeks to *clever children*, has often struck us as applicable to many traits of their character and points of their history. This wanting the after-clap to a story, and insisting on having the last possible word about it, is very much in the clever-childish vein. We do not, however, profess to account for the *cause* of this phenomena; our purpose is only to call the attention of the reader to its existence, and its contrast to the manner in which the *unity of action* is preserved in its completeness, without the addition of supplementary matter, by the writers of the modern or romantic school. Here the English drama appears to have attained the *juste milieu*, but the Modern French Romancists have run into the other extreme, and for fear of weakening the catastrophe by subsequent detail, have frequently cut it too short, and left the action incomplete. The effect of these *mutilated catastrophes* is very startling at first, but they pall on repetition, and the trick of them becomes unpleasantly manifest. For examples of our meaning, we refer to any play of *Dumas*, and almost any play of Victor Hugo. Thus in the former's tragedy upon the story of Catharine of Cleves (we can never remember the names of *Dumas's* tragedies, as they never have the slightest connexion with the subject), the death of St. Megrim does not fully complete the action; we have a desire to know the Duchess' fate; and in Lord Leveson



Gower's adaptation of this play to the English stage, she poisons herself immediately after her lover's assassination. This is a case in point, as showing the difference between English and French conceptions on the subject.

A familiar illustration of the difference between the Classic and Romantic methods of winding up the action of a play in the catastrophe, is afforded by the drama of *Lucrezia Borgia*, as originally written for the stage, as adapted to opera, and as usually sung in opera. In Victor Hugo's play, Gennaro, after discovering that himself and companions have been poisoned at the banquet, *stabs Lucrezia*, who has just life left to announce their relationship before she falls at his feet. In the operatic version, he dies of the poison, and she sings a lament over him in presence of her husband and the chorus. The former termination is in the Romantic, the latter more resembles the Classic method. And it shows which way the sympathies of most moderns are, that, beautiful as the aria *era desso il figlio mio* is universally acknowledged to be, still it is generally felt to be almost an impertinence, and the opera as represented on the stage is usually, in compliance with public opinion, made to end with the death of Gennaro.

To return then from our digression: Ajax having fallen, the chorus enter to search for him; at first one division appears:

Labor, labor after labor;  
Here and there,  
Everywhere,  
No one nowhere can inform me.  
Hark, hark!  
Sure I hear a heavy tread.

It is the other division of the chorus, engaged in an equally fruitless search. Tecmessa is the first to discover the body and announce the hero's melancholy end. Teucer now appears and joins in the lamentation. They are preparing to inter the corpse when Menelaus forbids them to proceed. Ajax had endeavored to destroy the army, and especially the chiefs; he had proved more hostile than any Trojan; therefore he shall now be deprived of the honors of burial. Cast out on the yellow sand he shall become the banquet of sea-birds. Teucer



defies Menelaus, who goes off to call his "big brother," Agamemnon. But neither to him will the archer yield. The direst threats are interchanged, when the sage Ulysses interposes. By his expostulations the royal brothers are pacified, and they suffer the funeral obsequies to proceed.

It remains for us to say a few words on the manner in which the editor has accomplished his task. One thing we do not like in the outset — his *un-Latinizing* the Greek name. In the case of the deities it may do, though even here we think the necessity on the score of accuracy much exaggerated; doubtless Minerva and Mercury, for instance, were not *originally* equivalents to Athene and Hermes, but the usage of the Augustan poets ultimately made them such. But when it comes to *Thukydides* and *Sophokles*, we must enter our protest. True, there is the authority of Mr. Grote; but even Homer nods sometimes, and Grote is a little timorous and inconsistent, wavering between *Krete* and *Crete*, and in some other names. This, however, is a small matter. The compilation of notes is usually very good. Sometimes the editor has fallen into the error (which we have also observed in his friend, Professor Felton) of mixing up together several interpretations of different value, without any attempt at deciding among them. We would refer to the note on v. 33 as a striking example of this. Dogmatism, it may be said, shows arrongance in an editor. Possibly, but on the other hand, want of discrimination is a confession of inefficiency. Sometimes, too, we think that, copious as the notes are, a bare reference to a grammar is given where an explanation at length of an idiom or peculiarity would have been desirable. Thus, on v. 27, where the cattle are described as found killed, *αὐτοῖς ἐπιστάταις, shepherds and all*, we have merely *see Matth. 405, obs. 3*. Now an edition of this sort ought to be a manual of the play, so that it may be read without any other book, even a lexicon; such, at least, is our opinion. Moreover, we have a striking recollection of the manner in which a knowledge of this idiom was first impressed upon ourselves by a note in Peile's *Agamemnon*, while this very brief allusion in the book before us might easily be overlooked by a student.

V. 31. *Quære*, may not the intermingling of different tenses in Greek and Latin poets be merely a poetic



licence, for the sake of the measure, as English poets use *be* for *are* and *ye* for *you* (accusative), both strictly grammatical errors, for the sake of the rhyme?

V. 49. Here we think the editor should have mentioned the other and more common meaning of *καὶ δὲ*, *well then I let you alone*, and numerous other places.

V. 136. *Σε πράσσοντα* we would take as an *accusative absolute*. Any case may be used absolutely in Greek.

V. 352. We really cannot see what would be gained by the proposed substitution of *ποιμενοῖν* for *ποιμένων*. Reiske's emendation, *πιμονὰν* (adopted by Wunder), seems altogether preferable.

V. 659. We prefer Hermann's and Bothe's construction of *ἄλλπλαγχε*, but at the same time feel bound to admit that the editor has the majority of commentators on his side. But how he has been induced to take up Mr. Lewes's (not Lewis, as here printed, and which our students would be apt to take up for *Tayler Lewis*) idea that *the Greek chorus dit not dance*, we really cannot conceive. Whoever wants to see an abundant confutation of this crotchet, will find it in the *Classical Museum*, vol. iii. pp. 229, 599. It is hard to see how a man with an ear for metre can doubt that not only the *chorus* generally, but some of the *main personages* occasionally made their entry dancing; Bacchus, for instance, in the *Bacchæ* of Euripides, when he rushes in with

ἄπτε κεραῦνιον αἴθορα λαμπάδα  
σύμφλεγε σύμφλεγε δώματα Πενθέως.

Lighten the | glittering | torch of the | thunderbolt!  
Kindle up! | kindle up! | mansions of | Pentheus!

We had marked some other notes for comment, but being more anxious to praise than criticise this very neatly and carefully got-up edition, abstain from further remark, heartily commending it to all students and scholars.

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## PARIS IN LITTLE, AND SOME OF THE VANITIES THEREOF.

Fraser, May 1855.

'GOOD morning, Bleecker, *good morning!* You are just the very man I wanted to see! You come in as *à propos* as the monkey in the friar's sermon.'

'What monkey and what friar? It may be an old story, but I don't remember it.'

'Perhaps because it was not worth remembering, for it can't be that I never told it to you. It is an old story to me, which I happened to think of from going to church yesterday in a gymnasium.'

'A gymnasium?'

'Yes, a regular gymnasium, and one that is in full operation on weekdays; poles, ropes, ladders, all the apparatus remaining there, only pushed into corners so far as practicable during sermon-time.'

'The congregation were turned out of their regular place of worship by the municipal improvements I suppose?'

'So you might naturally guess, but it happens to be in consequence of a fire. Now this set me thinking of all the queer places where I had been to church.'

'No great compliment to the sermon that.'

'It was a very good one though. Still it could not hinder the locality from bringing up some odd associations in my mind, for I have been to church in a good many bizarre and unchurch-like places: stables in, or just *out* of, Rome, theatres in America, private houses in some countries, and have witnessed some queer scenes also in regular church buildings; it was one of these that occurred to me just as you came in.'

'Several years ago, no matter how many, I was in Naples all alone, waiting for three men who were to join me there. As the men didn't come till long after I had seen all the sights, I made a mighty effort to utilize the delay by getting up the language; and finding my previous book-learning of but moderate practical utility, I tried various other plans; one of them was to frequent



all assemblages of the people around, jugglers, rhapsodists, popular preachers, any kind of exhibitors in short, and hear what was being declaimed. Not a remarkably sagacious proceeding on my part, for all these exhibitors generally hold forth in the vulgar dialect, so you can't understand a word of what they say, and if you could it wouldn't help you much towards a knowledge of grammatical and polite Italian. Such however was my plan, and in pursuance of it I one day dropped into a little church, the name and situation of which I have now forgotten, but it was a very little one, and crowded with persons of both sexes, chiefly of the lower orders. It was a fine spring morning, and the heat (not to mention the dirt and odor) was overpowering, though the large windows or skylights of the roof had been judiciously left open. The preacher himself, a little 'round fat, oily' man seemed, nearly overcome by it; whether this made him speak more slowly than usual, or whether his discourse had less than the usual allowance of dialect, at any rate I could make out a good deal of what he said. His discourse, or at least the exordium of it, in which he was only just fairly launched, treated of temptation and various disguises assumed by man's great enemy for that purpose. 'You know, my children, he appeared to our first parents under the form of a serpent. Sometimes he presents himself in the guise of a dog, sometimes of a cat, sometimes — (the speaker's zoological vocabulary did not appear to be very extensive, and he hesitated between his clauses) — sometimes (looking around) he takes the form of a monkey.'

'Scarcely were the words out of the friar's mouth when one of the big skylights was partially darkened, there was a rush of a falling body, a rattle of chains and a portentous yell, and down tumbled, directly on the pulpit in front of the preacher, a huge black ape nearly clawing off his nose in its descent.

'You *may* say there was a row! Women fainting, men crossing themselves, some scrambling for the door, all making an awful uproar, to swell which the strange visitor lent his small voice. It was some minutes before two or three of the stoutest among the male portion of the audience plucked up sufficient courage to go to the rescue of the friar, who, with his hands over his eyes,



was frantically endeavouring to squeeze himself backwards through the wall, not altogether free from the idea which evidently possessed the bulk of his congregation, namely, that the Evil One in person had come up — or down — upon him. I suddenly bethought me of my foreign attire, and fearing that the presence of a heretic might be construed to have some connexion with the apparition, made myself particularly scarce, without waiting to see how the good people disposed of his monkeyship, but I afterwards learned how he came there. The wife of one of the foreign ministers at Naples had a strong practical turn for zoology, and kept quite a menagerie of strange animals for her private delectation, among them this big ape, who, having escaped from confinement that day, after scrambling over the roofs of numerous houses, endeavoured to perch in the church window, but the ledge of it being too narrow to hold him, he tumbled down just in time to give point to the preacher's exordium.'

'Well, the comparison is a flattering one for me, at any rate; perhaps for both of us. But what did you want me for? To go to church anywhere?'

'Not exactly. To do that on a week-day might be against your principles. No, it was something very different. Thinking of different churches put me in mind — why I can't say — of different dinners, and I thought — suppose we go once to this new Dinner de l'Exposition.'

'*Connu mon chère*. We have been there already, last week. It's no go. Dinners good enough in conception, but cold in execution, that is to say when served — courses too long, considering they are not numerous — railroad to pass the wine gets off the truck — altogether more show than substance.'

'Really? Common report would have led me to expect something better. But tell me, now; where had you been dining before — the day before, for instance?'

'The day before? I dined with Gerard Ludlow.'

'Who has one of the best cooks (in a quiet way) in Paris. And the day before that?'

'With Charley Vanderlyn and Tom Edwards and some Cubans at Philippe's.'

'Exactly. You have been feasting at two splendid banquets, and then go to dine at a dollar a-head. It



isn't fair to the last dinner. Still you may be right. There was one thing which made the Diner de l'Exposition suspicious — the great amount of *réclame* that heralded it.'

'In the newspapers — I mean what pass for such in Paris?'

'Not merely in what, till a new word is invented expressly for them, we must continue to call the newspapers but in several other quarters. Here, for instance, is a whole series of little books about various phases of Parisian life — *Les Petits Paris*; and one of the first in the series, *Paris Restaurant*, published at the end of last year, has for its point and conclusion an unqualified panegyric upon the Diner de l'Exposition, which was not then in existence, and upon the company which started it (magnificently self-christened *La Société Générale de Gastronomie*), which had just commenced its existence.'

'There must be a good many of these *Petits Paris*. I thought of waiting till they had all appeared, and then reading them in a lump.'

'That you would find as unsubstantial work as making your dinner off *plats sucrés*. There are fifty volumes announced; judging from what has appeared, they might as well go on to a hundred and fifty, being mere bundles of anecdote and gossip, each volume very slightly connected by the leading idea conveyed in its title.'

'Some of the *Charivari* men wrote them?'

'Yes, the authors of *The Memoirs of Bilboquet*, Taxile Delord, I believe, and Clement Caraguel. Probably a good deal of the matter intended for that clever but somewhat coarse prose parody (which, as you may recollect, stopped or *was stopped* at the third volume) has been worked up in these little fivepenny books.'

'To begin with the restaurants is natural enough. I am sure the first definite idea one gets of Paris is a longing for a French dinner. When a boy, you see pictures of the Tuileries and the Louvre as you do of a hundred other buildings in other cities, and all these things are laid up in your mind to be 'done' in a regular course of sightseeing. But the description of a French dinner by an appreciation of dinners comes home to the feelings as something peculiar, and the first impulse of a stranger on arriving is to dine at some crack café.'



'Yes, and one of the first things that strikes the stranger in Paris is the general impression of cookery going on perpetually everywhere. A gastronomic odour pervades the city. Nevertheless I do not think — perhaps because, extensive as the subject is, it has already been worked up in such a variety of ways — that the Bilboquet set have given to mankind any very new or original observations on it, although they show sufficient pretension in the formal enunciation of *aphorismes* and *pensées*.'

'That is taking a leaf out of Brillat Savarin's book.'

'It is. But they pronounced Savarin to obsolete, *rococo*, *vieux doctinaire*, a foggy in short.'

'I know his book well. He says some judicious things about provender, but is much at sea — like most of his countrymen — in the matter of potables. For instance, where he says that you must change your wine after every three glasses. If he had said *bottles*.'

'*Vous êtes orfèvre, M. Bleecker*.'

'No, but you know that as well as I do. To take too much champagne consecutively is an error; but fancy a man coming across a good bottle of Château Margaux about the period of the roast, and letting go before he had imbibed at least half of it! The idea of *crossing* wines (always excepting the interludes of champagne), and going backwards in your series once formed, is a fatal error on sanitary as well as æsthetic grounds. It plays the very deuce with a man.'

'Seriously, I agree with you. Speaking of restaurants, there are three which continue to hold the first nominal rank, as they have done for some time, the Trois Frères Provençaux, the Café d'Anglais, and the Café de Paris. Though some undertake to class some other *cafés* with them (as the Bilboquet authors do Véfour, Véry, and the Madeleine), these three are generally spoken of together, apart from the rest; the stranger usually hears of them as such. Still, as they are at present constituted and directed, the candid and diligent inquirer must admit that they owe a great deal to *prestige*, and a great deal more to accessories not strictly coming under the head of gastronomics. Thus very much of the reputation and attraction of the Trois Frères is due to the luxury, or rather the show of its service, and the convenience of



its rooms for private balls or 'hops,' semi-extemporized after dinner or supper. As to the mere eating and drinking, the satisfying of the *ἔρος ἐδῆτος καὶ πῶσιος*, I have eaten some good dinners there, and some very middling ones, more of the latter than of the former — and good or bad, they are always dear.'

'I suspect it is necessary to make no end of fuss at the Trois Frères. I went there once to order dinner for a party, gave directions quietly and somewhat hastily, and we had a cruelly bad spread. Another time I went with Sumner; he was as pretentious as a Russian prince, and held a council of war with nearly the whole establishment; that time we did very well.'

'True enough, I should say from my own experience; but there are some things in which the Trois Frères is positively and invariably deficient; for instance, if you order Rhine wine, they give you some very mediocre stuff, hardly equal to two-florin Forster, at the modest price of twenty-five francs. It is all very well to say that you ought to drink the wine of the country, and call for no exotics; that's a good general rule, but surely at a place like the Trois Frères you ought to be able to get good hock.'

'Particularly as it is better after the oysters than Chablis or Sauterne, or any other drinkable.'

'The Anglais, I think, lives up to its reputation better than the Trois Frères, though somewhat fallen off within a few years. It was in great case as late as '50. Between '40 and '50 it had more repute for suppers than dinners, though sufficiently famous for both. Its chief deficiency now is the cellar, which used to be very superior, especially in the article of Burgundies, both still and sparkling. Yet after all a carefully selected dinner at the Anglais is a very comfortable thing. As to the Café de Paris, how it keeps up its reputation I never could understand. It may be my bad luck or want of sufficient experience, but having ordered dinners there myself, and assisted at the dinners of others, time and again, I never found anything remarkable there; not so good a spread, for instance, as you could get at the Maison d'Or, and much dearer. I fancy this establishment must be living on its former renown, for great renown it had in past days, when you and I were boys, and *before* we were



boys. In those days the doughty Véron used to dine there daily, and English *milords* to get drunk there nightly and *all*-nightly. In those days, or somewhat later, it was the scene of some famous bets, such as Count Quelquechose's five hundred franc dinner.'

'How was that?'

'Somehow thus. The Count de Quelquechose was one of your *viveurs* about town, who united in himself two qualities that do not always go together, the *gourmand* and *gourmet* — in plain English, the glutton and epicure. So you may suppose a large share of his means was absorbed in what the transcendentalists call 'appropriating to one's self a portion of the outer world,' and it often became convenient to him to dine at other people's expense; and he often did so, for he was one of those men whom it is a pleasure to see eat, he went into the operation with such a will. Once upon a time the Count made a bet that he would eat 'to his own cheek,' five hundred francs of dinner at the Café de Paris. Five hundred francs, a hundred dollars, twenty pounds sterling! You don't look duly astonished. Mind, he was not merely to order and partake of that amount of dinner, but to eat every morsel of everything he called for (except of course bones and shells); and drink every drop of liquor he ordered. Moreover it was stipulated that he should not win if he died, or was taken seriously ill within forty-eight hours after the event. The match came off at the place and time appointed, in the presence of a select company. I wish I had the bill of fare to show you, but it was rather before my time, *πλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν*; I can only give you the prominent items of the performance. He began with some caviare, by way of a whet, which made good fifteen francs. Then came the *potage*, and this was his strong point, and what principally contributed to his winning. It happened that at that period the Café de Paris boasted among its exotic luxuries *birds'-nest soup*, at twenty francs the portion. The Count called for, and consumed, *twelve* successive *potages*. When you consider that a French 'soup for one' is nearly or quite enough for two, not to mention the richness of this Chinese dish, you may wonder, indeed, that he had capacity or appetite remaining for the main body of the dinner. What the *entrées* were I can't say;



but his other principal resting point was the roast, composed exclusively of game, and comprising several of the rarest birds in or out of season; they had the double advantage of being dear and easily digestible. Meanwhile you may suppose the umpires watching every plate, to see that it was fairly emptied, with occasional remarks like this, 'M. le Comte, here is a wing of a pheasant not picked,' and so forth.'

'And the wine?'

'That did not help him so much as it might have done a similarly situated Anglo-Saxon. The French, as you know, are no great drinkers to begin with, and the Parisian cafés have no very expensive wine in comparison with our hotel standard. The Count needed all his wits about him too, and could not afford to run the risk of disturbing his head. Two bottles of Johannisberg (or what did duty for such at the Café de Paris), at thirty-five francs each, and a bottle of the best Lafitte at fifteen francs, was all he could do in that line.'

'He ought to have had some of our twenty-five dollar Madeira.'

'He did not require it, for he gained his bet 'in hand,' as you may say, and the umpires announced the successful result as he was peeling a fine peach. Then came the *bouquet*. 'Gentlemen,' said Quelquechose, looking round on the admiring company, 'is the wager fairly won?' They all declared it was. '*Garçon*, bring me a pineapple and a bottle of *Kerres*.' (Xeres, or Sherry, to wit.) And forthwith he proceeded, over and above his bargain, to eat the entire pine-apple, without sugar, European fashion, but *with* about two-thirds of the *Kerres* to keep all straight. 'And now, gentlemen,' continued the Count, as he lit a cigar, 'double the bet; make it ten thousand francs to five, and I will eat a similar supper in two hours from now.' His auditors were fairly 'knocked;' not a man dared take him up. However, the losers partially consoled themselves with the thought that they had a loophole left; he might die or seriously 'indigest himself' within the two days. Vain were their hopes! The Count continues to be well and flourishing up to the present time. You may see him now any fine day (when his finances are in good order) parading on the Champs Elysées with his *dokkar* and his *steppair*.



'A certain number of years seems necessary to put a café in the first rank. Some of those called secondary need only the sanction of a little more antiquity to take place with or above the best known names. Such is Philippe's; in the Rue Montorgueil, situated near the site of the now defunct Rocher de Cancale, professing to be the virtual successor of that once famous restaurant, and like it making a particular merit of its fish. The eating there is probably better than anywhere else, the wine sometimes open to criticism. It is a great resort of gentlemen epicures; ladies do not frequent it so much, on account of the inconvenient locality and the still more inconvenient staircases. For a bachelor dinner, where the company is not *very* fastidious about their liquor, no place beats it.'

'I remember Philippe's well these many years. I was there in '51, when an extempore bet was decided, not exactly like your Count's, but interesting too in its way. A Mississippi gentleman won a big pile. He bet that he would bring five hundred drops out of an empty bottle, from which the last supernaculum had been drained.'

'Without putting anything into it, of course?'

'Of course; it was done in the fairest way, without any dodge, on the purest natural philosophical principles. The secret is this. There is a great deal of moisture still remaining in the bottle, only it is dispersed all over the inside surface in homœopathic particles, too minute to be poured out in any ordinary way. You take the bottle, hold it nearly horizontally thus, shake it up well, and strike the lower part of the neck repeatedly on your hand. After you have manipulated it in this way for a minute or two (the length of time depends on the performer's skill), the moisture becomes collected and condensed in the neck, and then you can jerk out upon a plate or a sheet of white paper more drops in a quarter of a minute than you can count in a quarter of an hour. It made quite a sensation at the time, but soon spread about. A Frenchman who was with us exhibited the trick next night at the Maison d'Or.'

'Ah, that is another B, No. I, the Maison Dorée, as it calls itself on the outside, the Maison d'Or as everybody else calls it. This establishment has acquired an



immense *vaudeville* and *feuilleton* reputation; the name is redolent of Carnival and *mi-carême* suppers. Ten years ago the Maison Dorée was not; where it now is, there was a nice little unpretending restaurant, Le Café de la Cité, very good, and particularly cheap. It is no better now, and certainly no cheaper; the silver of the old establishment remains in the new one to this day; but the change of name and the chrysography and other decorations of the outer walls gave it a start. It hit upon the idea of running opposition to the Anglais, and underbidding it in the article of suppers. Its *écrevisses à la Bordelaise* are unmatched. Verdier has good wine in his cellars for the initiated, though the chance customer does not get a great deal of it.

'And some choice cognac for his American patrons. The foreigners have done a good deal for him, and no foreigners more than our countrymen. He owes them something. It is a pity the Maison is even still less of a place for ladies than Philippe's.'

'You may take a Russian or an Italian countess there, but hardly a party of unacclimated Anglo-Saxonesses. Were you ever at Vachette's? That epris the resentative now of what the Café de la Cité was, a place where you can get a good French dinner at a reasonable price. Some of his dishes are perfect; in the king of French soups, *bisque d'écrevesse*, he excels. The principal drawback at this restaurant is the small size of the rooms, and especially the low ceilings, which make it disagreeable in warm weather. Vachette's is a great place for artists on a *grand* holiday.

'In class B we may also place the Café de la Madeleine (promoted by Bilboquet to class A), a capital place for breakfasts. And this brings us to a restaurant little renowned in books, about which, for instance, the *Petits Paris* are utterly silent, but well-known to all æsthetic livers. It was much frequented by deputies when the French had a constitution.'

'You must mean the Café Voisin. A wonderful cellar it has. If you could put that and Philippe's together, you would have the perfection of a dinner.'

'So I have heard others remark, but the remark is hardly just to the Voisin. The cookery there is not inferior, on the contrary. It may not boast any specially



renowned *plat*, but the *average* of the dishes is blameless. In the course of several years' experience, I have never eaten, anything bad there for breakfast, dinner, or supper: more than I can say of any other café in Paris. Give me the Voisin above them all, for reasonably sized banquets that is; you can't dine thirty people there, and give them a ball afterwards. It adds to the charm of that quiet retreat at the corner of the Rue St. Honoré and Rue Luxembourg, that there has never been any pretension, or fuss, or *reclame* about it.'

'I remember the cellar as everything that can be desired. All the wines are good, and you may proceed methodically from lower to higher qualities, each of its kind faultless, from Margaux to Château Margaux, for instance.'

'Bignon, Magny, and Leblond are all placed in the second class by Bilboquet. *Sed quære*. Also Beauvallet, who had a *specialité* for Sauterne, but his stock of *Chateau d'Yquem* is running low now. Of third-class restaurants, Deffieux, near the Porte St. Martin, is a fair specimen. It is a convenient place to dine at when you are going to one of the Upper Boulevard theatres afterwards. Cheap enough, and not bad in its way.'

'I remember that place too, and Edwards getting very ill there — of *bouchées de crevettes* he said it was.'

'A most unchristian and perilous dish anywhere. After the thirdraters comes the abyss of bad restaurants, comprising among others all the places (and their name is legion) where they offer you soup, three courses, and dessert for from thirty sous to two francs.'

'One man's meat is another man's poison, as the proverb says. I have known English and American artists — or art-students — made seriously ill in a few weeks by frequenting establishments of this sort. On the other hand, I saw a letter this winter in *The Sewer* from one of its correspondents here, who enlarged rapturously on the cheapness of life in Paris, particularly the delicious dinner he got for thirty cents.'

'Doubtless they suited him exactly. I should like nothing better, for my part, than to make the 'head devil' of *The Sewer* and all his staff dine at a thirty-sous restaurant as long as they survived it. It would be a righteous retribution for their misdeeds. But it illustrates the adage



even better perhaps to compare your reporter's eulogy with an incident recorded in this same *Paris Restaurant*. One wealthy provincial meets another in the Palais Royal, and to repay him for previous hospitalities offers him a dinner at 'Halavant's.' The invited, finding by sad experience that this 'Halavant's' is a two-franc restaurant, incontinently sends a couple of friends (the French require two seconds a-piece for a duel, you know; they always must talk twice as much about a thing as we do) to call out the inviter for having insulted him! The Amphitryon was not valorous, though it is hard to understand how a man habitually dining at a two-franc restaurant should be careful of his life; he offered to apologize. 'A bare apology will not do,' said the seconds. 'No; you must order a dinner for four, the best that can be had from Chevet's at thirty francs a-head, wines extra to correspond.' And it was only on these terms that he got off his encounter. The French *littérateurs* are not to be duped any longer by the *diners à prix fixe*, and I doubt if the artists are. The last time I 'assisted' at an artists' dinner, we had good, honest mutton chops and fried potatoes, washed down with twelve-sous Bordeaux from the cask.

'You are persuaded then that the two-franc dinners are necessarily bad in themselves, and not from difference of habit?'

'Most certainly. In the first place, they do not represent *ordinary* French cookery, in the same way that a plate of roast beef at an eating-house or a steak at a chop-house represents ordinary American or English cookery. They are a sham and a base imitation of *scientific* French cookery at one-half or one-third of the lowest possible real price. The *cuisine bourgeoise* is not particularly deficient, either in simplicity or quantity. But when you pretend to have a number of dishes for the price of a single one, there is no escape from one of two alternatives; either the viands will be curtailed in quantity down to microscopic dimensions, or they will be miserably inferior in quality. In the former category come the Italian vetturino dinners. I never travelled *vett* but one day; that day's bill of fare is engraven on the recording tablets of my mind. After the unavoidable vermicelli soup, for the *pièce de résistance* two mouthfulls of *bouilli*, for the *entrée* one very small sweetbread, for



the roast one snipe, for the *plat sucré* one fritter (and a small one at that), for the dessert one apple, one biscuit, and an infinitesimal fraction of cheese. It would have made a comfortable lunch for Tom Thumb — not Barnum's, but the original article, who used to go to bed in a thimble. At the *prix fixe* restaurants I imagine (of course we neither of us know anything about them from personal experience) that the other alternative prevails; there is enough to eat if it were good, but it isn't — very much the reverse. Possibly not extremely bad in the actual eating; for here the disguising abilities of the cook come into play. Wonderful powers of temporary persuasion over brute matter they have, these Gauls. The other day I wanted some leads for an American pencil. English leads are prohibited, and all the French sizes were too small; but the shopkeeper not only persuaded me that his article fitted, but he persuaded the leads to fit until I had bought them and gone home, then they tumbled out as fast as they were put in. You know the old story of George IV.'s butler, who had drunk up his royal master's best hock, except one bottle. The wine being ordered for some great dinner, the trusty servant took a chemical friend into council, established a small laboratory in his room, and made the wine according to sample as fast as it was wanted. Everybody praised it and drank it, and everybody was deadly sick next morning, but in those days of toping that passed as a matter of course. Similarly I fancy your cheap restaurant cook may work up something that will be tolerably palatable for the moment, but the after consequences are fearful.'

'But suppose a man can't afford to pay more than thirty sous for his dinner?'

'Then let him regulate his bill of fare accordingly. There is no reason why he should not dine *well* for that sum, or even less, in any country except California or Australia, if he will dine off one dish. Low-priced dinners, low-priced things of all sorts, may be excellent in their way. It is your shams, your cheap imitations of high-priced things, that are bad in *every* way. A man may make a capital meal on cheese and bread and butter, or, even without the third article, on the other two; he may have good bread and cheese, and in sufficient quantity, for, say at the outside, sixpence sterling, or



twelve sous; but if he wants to have a dinner of three courses for twice or three times that price, he is likely to get nothing good, not even the bread. A bottle of English ale is a capital beverage, and may be had here in Paris for two francs; but if you attempt to get a bottle of champagne for the same price or ten sous more, you will have a very bad beverage, simply because good champagne cannot be produced at so small an expense as good ale. You may indeed *happen* to get anything, from a house to a dinner, at less than the market value, but only through some accidental and exceptional state of things. Many people ruin themselves in business, restaurateurs as well as others, but no one ever started in business with the deliberate intention of ruining himself, as any restaurateur would who gave good provisions ready cooked for less than they cost raw.'

'It seems clear enough. And yet you have a plentiful and luxurious dinner, comprising the best of everything in market, at an American hotel for fifty cents, that is two francs and a half.'

'Yes, but recollect that, with the exception of labour, everything is (or was till very recently) much cheaper in the American cities than in Paris. Rents were lower, all provisions, except wine (not included in our *table d'hôte*), much lower, fuel very much lower. Since prices generally, and rents especially, have gone up, most of the city hotels have raised their price to seventyfive cents, nearly four francs. Then there are two things which help our hotel-keepers a great deal. First, they make huge profits on their wine. For instance, you, Mr. Bleecker, in the course of your business, sell mine host of the St. Knickerbocker, a goodly batch of Medoc, at the rate of about thirtythree cents a bottle. If you put up at the house, you will have to pay him a dollar for the same. Similarly he buys his champagne at fourteen dollars a dozen, and retails it at two dollars and a half a bottle. Just a hundred per cent. in one case, and nearly twice as much in the other, after allowing a few cents for the claret bottles. Secondly, they can calculate almost to a unit the precise number of persons for whom they have to provide. There are so many 'boarders;' all these dine or pay for their dinner, which comes to the same thing; when there is enough for them, there is



enough for any outsiders who may drop in. Look at the Parisian hotel *tables d'hôte*; at a respectable one you pay three francs and a half, and for that sum get a respectable dinner, perhaps, certainly not a very good one. At a crack *table d'hôte* you must pay five francs.'

'Like that of the Hotel des Princes. Have you been there lately?'

'Not for four years or more. The last time I dined there we were a small party of French and Americans, your brother among the latter, just after the new dining-room was completed. I thought we got on very well, but the others blamed the dinner exceedingly; said it was too long, the dishes cold, *réchauffés* — in fact, found all sorts of fault with it. Cabinet dinners are apt to spoil a man for *tables d'hôte*. Talking of the hotels here, some of their private dinners are hard to beat. Whenever you expect any friends here, who are 'some punkins,' persuade them to put up at the Hôtel Bristol. They *may* ask you to dine there, and it almost realizes your ideal of Philippe and the Voisin combined. Your only difficulty will be how to repay them, unless you have the tallest kind of a *chef*.'

'It's all very well, Frank, but don't you sigh after the flesh-pots of Egypt sometimes? the game and the oysters especially? I was at a real national dinner last December, soon after arriving, at Ludlow's, okra soup, pickled oysters, and canvas-backs.'

'I hope there were some Frenchmen present to be duly impressed.'

'Why, no. Ludlow had heard that it was a bad season at home for canvas-backs, and wanted to have them tried in private committee before hazarding the reputation of the country among foreigners; so we tried them, and there was some difference of opinion, and we went on trying, and — and — in short, we eat up all the ducks — there were only fifteen of them between eight of us.'

'Very considerate on your part. To give the French an American dinner you must wait till they come to see you at home. Transported viands do not generally pay. I wonder now supposing some foreign friend were to pay you a visit in Gotham, and you wanted to get up a strictly national banquet for him, how you would set about it? Let us see. To begin with the winter bill of



fare, you might have okra soup, but it must be made with preserved okra and tomatoes, which do not give a correct and complete idea of the dish. Say, rather, oyster-soup, which is in season, and stewed terrapin, which is virtually a soup also.'

'Then for fish — halibut *gratin*?'

'No, that is but a Frenchified dish, a mediocre imitation of turbot *crème gratin*. Halibut steak will answer.'

'But you must have *tartare* sauce for that.'

'Not necessarily. Or what do you say to our smelts, which beat whitebait, or any small European fish?'

'But the English have smelts.'

'And shad too, but not like ours in anything but name. They have smelts as we have apricots, and as the French have apples. Now, the main body of the dinner will be the most difficult part to nationalize, for the *pièces de résistance* are usually English, and the *entrées* French. We must have a ham at one end of the table; no American dinner can be complete without ham. It is surprising that, consuming so much of the article as we do, we have not improved it more; the best Virginia is a long way behind Westphalia. At the other end must be some kind of fowl; what do you say to a *wild* turkey, roast, with that inevitable New England adjunct of roast turkey, cranberry sauce?'

'The combination is not very scientific however.'

'No, it is not in accordance with table æsthetics. The cranberries would do better with roast venison or mutton.\* We will have them there only for the name of the thing, and our relish shall be a slice of buffalo tongue, which is far preferable to the ham. For vegetables there will be sweet potatoes, hominy, and fried egg-plant, all strictly peculiar and appropriate. So much for the principal course; now for the removes: fried oysters of course, and a venison steak. Our roasts shall be the unapproachable canvas-back, that delicious 'quail' which, I believe, is properly some kind of partridge, that equally delicious 'partridge' which is properly a ruffed

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\* The English reader will bear in mind that the American cranberry is altogether different from the fruit to which he is accustomed under that name. It is nearly as large as a cherry, and of a bright lake or light crimson colour.



grouse. (*There's* a bird you couldn't eat with cabbage; the idea would be profanation). That will do for the solids. Bear steak and rattlesnake fricassee would be as out of place in a New York dinner as frog soup in a Parisian.

'For the sweets, pumpkin pie doubtless?'

'We must have it on principle, though it tastes more like gingerbread poultice than anything else. Also that king of pies, the (so-called) cocoa-nut pudding.'

'Isn't that an English dish.'

'I used to think so, but never saw it in the 'old country,' and presume we may claim it. For dessert, some of those prime apples which are exported to all parts of the world, Newtown pippins, Rhode Island greenings, Spitzenbergs, and so forth. So much for our winter dinner. Now for the summer one. Okra soup, which runs *bisque d'écrevisse*, very hard; shad; the substantials must stand as before; then soft crabs *à libitum* for the remove; plovers for the roast; and for dessert a big water-melon. Towards autumn we may introduce a grand flourish of green corn before the roast; and the shad must be replaced by — I hardly know what — perhaps a black-fish, stewed in claret, after the manner of John Waters of the Knickerbocker. I think a man might live pretty comfortably on such fare, though it does not present the finish and *ensemble* of a French *menu*.'

'One needn't starve, especially with a black cook for the game and oysters. Our sable brethren shine there decidedly. But we have forgotten one important point, the beverages; they must be national to correspond.'

'Nay, surely Bacchus is a true cosmopolite.'

'Excuse me. At a French dinner you drink French wines; at a German dinner German wines.'

'At an English dinner?'

'English wines, port and sherry, made not perhaps on the premises, like George IV.'s hock, but in the country.'

'Like a great deal of our champagne.'

'Precisely. Which reminds me that we must have Newark cider, after which no European cider deserves the name. As to the native grape, I can't go into raptures about Catawba. It is like a bad imitation of that artificial wine one sees in England, and nowhere else, sparkling Moselle.'



'We may claim Madeira by right of naturalization and improvement.'

'Yes, we have fairly annexed that. And sherry cobblers, for the preparation is an American one, though they are made with Spanish wine. But if we talk any more about dinners. I shall feel prematurely hungry. What comes after *Paris Restaurant*?

'Chronologically, I don't remember; logically, I should say *Paris Viveur*. How would you translate *viveur* by the way? Fast man,' possibly on the system of rendering by equivalents.'

'But the term is less refined.'

'As all English dissipation is less refined than French, one of the principal reasons possibly why the latter is more dangerous. *Paris Viveur*, is particularly scattering; random scraps and stories, with occasional faint attempts at moralizing upon them. Its best anecdotes are those of the tailors. The great artist of the last generation it seems was *Chevreuil*. He, like many other distinguished characters, got into Clichy, an establishment which is bound to figure largely in any treatise on *viveurs*. *How* he got there is not distinctly stated; whether through his own fault or that of others; whether he possessed too large a share of that confiding disposition generally predicated of the genus *schneider*; or whether he emulated too successfully the fast life of his clients. At any rate he got fairly 'stuck' there, and there it is that Bilboquet makes his acquaintance. The great man tells his hearer how, when a certain young exquisite had presumed to criticize one of his coats, he tore the garment to pieces on the spot, throwing the fragments into the face of an *ordinary* tailor who had rashly interfered in the discussion, struck the critic's name off his books, and only re-admitted him as a 'client' after an ample apology. *Chevreuil* is no more; but we are informed that he has left behind him to console humanity Blain and Sentis. The former is the personage, usually misspelt *Blin* by feuilletonists (not to be confounded with *Blanc*, of the Palais Royal, who has a speciality for waistcoats). Sentis is *the* artist *à la mode* at present. He used to be a firm; Werth, Girard, and Sentis, in the Rue Feydeau, a little street full of tailors, three or four deep in the same house. You would think there were enough of them in that



streetlet alone to rig out all Paris. I am inclined to suspect that Sentis, notwithstanding Bilboquet and the *Moutard* club, is like some other great institutions, not quite all he is cracked up to be. He has a dangerous tendency to pad, the least bit of padding I grant, but the least bit is too much. Whether we go on the old theory of dress, that clothes are meant to fit a man; or on what seems to be the new one, that they are meant *not* to fit, but to hang about him with a certain amount of grace, — in either case any artificial adaptation by padding shows an inferiority of workmanship.

'The last time I was in London I saw the advertisement of a tailor there who styled himself 'artist in draping the real form.' I supposed that was a discreetly insinuated compliment to the manly proportions of his customers, which did not require any *unreal* making-up.'

'He didn't go on the principle of Geoffrey Grayon's tailor (perhaps the one immortalized in Moore's Diary), who was comparing his art with the *kindred* one of sculpture. 'Really, Mr. Irving,' says he, 'our task is a much greater and more difficult one than the statuary's. He only has to make the shape of a man; we have to make *the shape and the clothes too!*'

'Very small matters these for two almost middle-aged Anglo-Saxon men to be talking about in this nineteenth century, when the siege of Sebastopol is going on, not to mention Cuba, and slavery, and Mormonism. Well, we are not great men either of us — we never were anything — not even in the State legislature, like Barnum's friend, the original proprietor of the Feejee mermaid. So we can afford to talk about small things if they amuse us and keep us comfortable.'

'It must be confessed that one's life in Paris comes to be very much made up of small things. We live amid and upon trifles — French trifles are so pleasant.'

'Yes, and we grow over fastidious and Sybaritic no doubt. We who at home were too happy if we could find a trouser pattern not the exact counterpart of every one else's, or a pair of gloves that didn't tear to pieces in a quarter of an hour and cover our hands with an aggravating white substance, learn to turn up a metaphorical nose at half the crack tradesmen in Paris. We grumble at Ville's boots, and blaspheme Boivin Ainé.



Certainly this is a great place for small things; the organization for the supply of minor wants is wonderful. For instance, if you get your boots muddied in crossing the Boulevards, you can go into an establishment on purpose for cleaning them. You perch on a high seat with your feet against a brace, much as if you were in a trotting sulky, and while the man polishes your pedal extremities you may *poser* for the passers-by, and at the same time enjoy the satisfaction of contemplating yourself in a glass opposite — a never-failing source of occupation and amusement to a Frenchman. Still there are some *desideranda* even here — a few things that you can't get.'

'Leads for your pencil?'

'After all they are as useful as blacking for your boots. There was another article that you couldn't get two years ago, and I am not sure that you can now — portable India-rubber bathing tubs, such as John Bull delights in. The invariable answer, on applying for the commodity, was a deliciously Hibernian enthymeme. 'There was no call for such articles, because there were so many facilities for bathing in Paris.' I wondered if the Parisians, previous to starting on a summer tour were supposed to have a bath that should last the whole season, as the Connecticut schoolboy used to wash his face overnight to save time in the morning.'

'Or perhaps their only idea of travelling was going to the sea-side, and having a natural bath always ready under your window.'

'Talking about baths reminds me of what is not a luxury but a necessity to people of decent habits — the supply of water in a dwelling house. Compare New York and Paris in this respect. The Seine water is drawn around in carts, laboriously carried up flights of stairs on men's backs, and costs you, for a large apartment or a small house, from twenty to thirty francs a month. Seventy-two dollars a year! At home, in every story and almost in every room, you have but to turn a cock, and out gushes the pure element, for a fourth, or less than a fourth, of what you pay your *porteur d'eau* here.'

'Except when the pipes freeze up and break, which happens once in three years at least, and woe betide the house when once the plumber gets into it.'



'All the improvements of civilization have their drawbacks. What are you laughing at?'

'That glorious bit of commonplace. It puts me in mind of the last farce at the Palais Royal. A captain's wife is deploring her husband eaten up by the Caffres; the servant consoles her with, *Mais Madame que voulez-vous? Chaque peuple a ses usages.*'

'H — m. Here are some more of the little books. *Paris Omnibus* — some interesting statistics — interesting really because they show how much better the poor omnibus horse is used in Paris than in Anglo-Saxon cities. An omnibus horse here costs five or six hundred francs to begin with.'

'Just about the price of an American stage horse.'

'A country stage horse, yes; a city omnibus horse, no. Then the Norman has fifteen quarts of oats a-day.'

'May be Bilboquet is gassing?'

'I suspect not. If you observe the horses yourself, you will see that they look in good condition. It is the *Quarante-sous* animals that suffer. Another fact you may not be aware of. The genesis of the omnibus is considerably ante-Shillibeerian; the thing, though not the name, dates as far back as Louis XIV. *Le grand monarque* licensed a public coach to ply from the market to the Tuileries with twelve insides. But it appears this first experiment was not successful. *Paris Propriétaire* and *Paris Portier* — these are two subjects that come home to the heart of many a man just now. I would wager a trifle that these two numbers are not the least read of the series. The way rents are up now is a caution to California. Fifty per cent. is a very moderate rise since 1850. In some cases it is a hundred per cent. or more. Furnished apartments are letting by the year higher than they used to let by the month; aye, forty per cent. higher. Happy is the man whose lease will carry him through the year of the Exposition. *Paris Bohème*; that may come next by way of contrast. There is not much to be said well, though a great deal may be, and has been said about the artistic and literary *Bohemian* after Henry Murger's book. The *Bohemien industriel* is little other than a modification of the too well-known *Chevalier d'industrie*. Of this class was the gentleman commemorated by our author, who, living in



a garret, professed to keep up a great establishment, including a black servant. This servant was himself; he not only put on a livery, but coloured his face and hands, and thus disguised he would carry a bouquet to one of *ces dames*, with his own compliments. Sometimes *ces dames* gave him a *pourboire*, which more than paid the cost of the nosegay, for flowers are not dear in Paris. There is room, however, for some chapters on the *Kings of Bohemia*, as we might call them — the really great writers, who make a great deal, and spend a great deal more. I believe Eugène Sue is or was one of these sovereigns, though Bilboquet does not mention him. Dumas *père* is emphatically one of them, and Dumas *fils* not far behind his illustrious progenitor. But Balzac, in his way, was perhaps the best of them all. One of his lucky hits is given here. He had just furnished his drawing-room in white satin complete, and was exhibiting it one evening to a few friends, wondering meanwhile how he should ever pay for it. 'We can't judge of the effect,' said one of the company, 'till it is fully lighted-up.' Forthwith the forty candles of the central chandelier were lit, and just then a publisher was announced. 'Show him in,' says Balzac, 'make yourself at home, my boys! Don't be afraid to put your feet on the sofas.' In comes the publisher, and is so overcome by the magnificence of the author's private life, that he offers any amount for a new romance. When Balzac was hard up, he used to talk of starting a grocery, with George Sand for *dame de comptoir*, a rose in her hair, *selon les règles*, and Théophile Gautier and Gérard de Nerval for apprentices, one weighing sugar and the other grinding coffee. Poor Gérard de Nerval! That was a true Bohemian for you! In want of the necessities of life, finding no better place to hang himself in than a miserable garret, all the while possessing quantities of curiosities stored away in other garrets, he hardly knew where himself. His real name, by the way, was no more Gérard de Nerval than Madame Dudevant's is George Sand; it was La Brunie. *Paris Bohème* was written before his catastrophe; but there are some judicious observations in it that might form a profitable commentary on his fate, pointing out the errors of supposing that poverty is the indispensable portal to the temple of literary fame. Most of the 'illustrations' of



modern French literature began life very comfortably. Lamartine, Victor Hugo, De Musset, De Vigny, Scribe, Janin, all had a sufficient income, inherited or earned, before they devoted themselves to literature. Chateaubriand though poor himself, had plenty of rich friends to help him. All this seems matter of course to you; you look as if you were hearing a batch of truisms. How many ardent young men would consider you a miserable Philistine!

'You don't.'

'No, indeed! I plead guilty to partaking in the common, worldly, prosaic, utilitarian opinion on the subject — Bilboquet's and yours — that is to say, I do not admit the feasibility of a man's starting in life with the idea of making his living by literary pursuits. In the first place, it is a point of the highest importance to any young man who has to make his own way. — we, with our American notions would probably say that it was very desirable for a young man in any situation, but we won't digress into that question — it is of the highest importance, I repeat, to a young man having to make his own way, that he should begin with some fixed and regular occupation — one that calls upon his time and attention, and brings him into professional contact with others at stated hours of the day. Unless his life is regularized by some such outward influence, it will be very difficult for him to methodize it by himself. Now, literature *cannot* be an occupation of this sort to a beginner in it; it only becomes such to a man who has already acquired a fair amount of literary reputation. And this one *à priori* theoretical consideration would settle the question for me without going into any enumeration of practical instances.'

'You don't believe then in poverty making geniuses?'

'My dear Bleecker, nothing *makes* genius but God. A genius is born, and not made or unmade by any process. Genius is usually accompanied by ambition — a more effective stimulus than poverty. Even in the exceptional case of a genius without ambition, still the man will write, or paint, or carve, as Jenny Lind used to say she sung 'because she couldn't help herself.' So far as the possession of wealth has any influence on genius, I believe its influence to be decidedly favourable; it gives



the author or artist a chance of producing more, by saving from the risk of premature death, and in various other ways. When you come to a lower order of intellect, if you take a clever man, or a man of talent, terms which cover a great deal of ground, and may be construed to comprise everybody who writes well enough to find publishers and readers, and ask, how far such a one's productiveness will be effected by his possession or want of means, that is another question altogether. It is highly probable that such a man will write more if the pecuniary proceeds of his pen are a serious object to him than if they are not. Even then I imagine it is a question more of quantity than quality, and it may be doubted how far the extra amount of production due to pecuniary stimulus is a benefit to the public, or to the writer's own ultimate reputation. All this is *entre nous* by the way. They are not the opinions I am in the habit of ventilating. It is an ungrateful and perilous task to throw any doubts in the way of a youth who has the least *Bohème* tendency. He sets you down mentally for an arrant Philistine with no soul above dollars, and gives you a prominent place in the great world-conspiracy against his renown.'

'*Paris Journaliste*. Why, Frank, what can they say about the newspapers? *There ar'n't any*'

'Not much left of them — except always the feuilleton of dramatic criticism. That is the Hope at the bottom of the Pandora's box of revolution. Out of it and the traditional 'business' of a journal, the *caput mortuum* which remains — penny-a-lining and so forth — *Paris Journaliste* is made up. Thus if you are curious to know the two principal and inexhaustible sources of *canards* when the 'city items department' is short of copy, they are, according to Bilboquet's authority, *young workwomen jumping out of garret windows*, and *seizures in clandestine gaming-houses*.'

'Since the stage is still lively and flourishing as ever, there ought to be plenty about it in the *Petits Paris*.'

'The subject is fertile enough; but consider how it has been written up, and down, and across, for the last hundred years or more. Delord — Caraguel — Bilboquet has had his shy at it already pretty effectually in his memoirs. Still there are a few things here worth looking at. What we vulgarly call 'funk' — the fear of the



public — is known in the vocabulary of the French stage as *le taf*. It appears that most of the distinguished actors and actresses are subject to this fear long after their reputation has been made. Déjazet is mentioned as an illustrious exception. Some resort to the natural remedy of *Dutch courage*, and drown the *taf* with good liquor. Some are always attacked with it if the accessories are not all in apple-pie order. Thus Arnal of the Variétés was actually unable to play one night because his cane had been changed. Then about the *claque*. Everybody knows that it is a regularly organized institution, but everybody doesn't know that it follows other collateral branches of industry, some of them unexceptionable enough such as buying in advance the *droits d'auteur* of dramatists hard up for ready money; others, more open to censure, such as taking bribes from one actress to hiss another. Here is an anecdote conveying a valuable moral in reference to puffery of all sorts. When Nestor Roqueplan, that excellent judge (and illustration) of humbug, was manager of the Variétés, he advised a playwright to leave out one of his pet bits of declamation. 'I can't,' says the author 'it's the gem of the piece.' 'On the contrary,' replies the manager, 'it's very bad, and the proof is that *I shall have to make the claqueurs put on an extra round of applause to pass it.*'

'Here is a little exemplification of the poco-curanteism we were speaking of a little while ago, generated by an *embarras de richesses*, manifesting itself in other things besides boots and gloves. *We* have been accustomed to admire the French dramatic performers *solidairement*, as the law reports say — one and all, down to those who play the most trivial parts. But behold Bilboquet, who has seen too much of them to be anything but critical, declares that in the whole range of tragedy and genteel comedy there are but three good actresses — Rachel, Augustine Brohan, and Allan. Madeleine Brohan, Fix, Denain, &c., are all dolls and automata!

'Alongside of *Paris Actrice* lie, quite naturally as it were, *Paris Lorette*, *Paris Faublas*, *Paris Mariage*, and so forth, reminding us what a wicked set these French are, and how they delight in subjects which we virtuous Anglo-Saxons never mention — in public. Seriously, if the Parisian stage does 'hold the mirror up to nature,'



it is a very bad kind of nature which it loves to reflect. Ever since the appearance of *La Dame aux Camélias* — by the bye, it is not so well known as it should be, that the bloody, radical, socialist redrepublic prohibited the performance of this play for two successive years, and that it only obtained a licence under De Morny's administration after the *coup d'état* — ever since the notorious Duplessis was canonized on the boards, the popular dramatists have vied with each other in depicting every shade and variety of vice and profligacy. There seemed to be a change lately, but it was only a pause; they have broken out again. Foremost among them is the same Dumas, junior, with his new piece at the Gymnase — the Empress' particular theatre, of all places — a piece the name of which is a term he has been proud to invent, and for which a celebrity is predicted equal to that of the word *lorette*, which made the literary fortune of M. Rocoplan *alias* Roqueplan. *Le Demi-Monde*. You would hardly guess what that means.'

'Second set?'

'Oh dear, no! It is very hard to translate except by a periphrasis. His *Demi-Monde* is *the link between good and bad society* — if you can admit the existence of such a thing — the world of compromised women, a social limbo, the inmates of which (according to Dumas' authority, at least) are perpetually struggling to emerge into the paradise of honest and respectable ladies. Such a society as Mrs. Rawdon Crawley was in before she experienced religion. It is hard to say which are the most disgusting, the boldly immoral dramas of Dumas *filis* and Gozlan; the motiveless and colourless productions of Feuillet, where the characters act in utter insensibility to moral distinctions, and the Whirlpool of caprice displaces the Zeus of reason; or the flimsy attempts at morality involved in such pieces as Serret's *Que dira le Monde?* in which a young man makes a *mariage de convenance* (what charming associations are conjured up by that phrase!) instead of espousing his mistress, all for the holy and unanswerable motive of *what Mrs. Grundy will say*. Barrière must be excepted from our censure. His name in connexion with his writings is provocative of a pun, as if he were a self-erected *barrier* to oppose the march of profligacy. An honest and sturdy satirist



is he, with wonderful bursts of cleverness — one might almost say of genius. Rather wanting in unity of design perhaps (against which the French habit of working in couples, or in leashes as they do sometimes, greatly militates), but powerful in detail.'

'I saw his *Parisiens*, which bears out what you say. His crack piece, *Les Filles de Marbre*, they have not given since I came here.'

'Buy it the next time you are on the Boulevards, it will be a franc well laid out. They will probably give it again about the time of the Exhibition. Meanwhile, if your admiration of the man will sustain you through the infliction, I will read to you, or at you, a metrical version of the same from a volume of manuscript poems, ludicrous and miscellaneous, wholly inedited, and likely to remain so, unless I should chance one fine morning to circumvent some very green publisher, or to find a few hundred dollars about me that I absolutely didn't know what to do with, neither of which contingencies is likely to happen soon.'

'Barrière has written some mediocre plays besides his two or three good ones?'

'Yes, he has worked with too many different collaborators, and tried too many different experiments. He has made farces for the Palais Royals, and dramatized other people's novels with very moderate success.'

'I saw a piece of his and Jules Lorin's played in London some years ago, where an artist woos and wins an interesting young widow, to the prejudice of a fashionable lion. I thought the artist-hero was a great snob myself, and hadn't the first idea of decent behaviour.'

'That is a weakness of artist heroes. In Augier and Sandeau's *Pierre de Touche*, which had such a success at the Français last year, the hero, that is, the good hero of the play, will insist on being followed everywhere by his dog, 'up stairs, down stairs, in my lady's chamber.' The bad hero finally kills the animal for trespass, which brings about the catastrophe of the piece. It didn't feel inclined to blame the bad hero; probably I should have done the same thing in his place, for the beast must have been a nuisance in respectable society. Yet after all, bluntness and frankness, even with a tendency to degenerate into rudeness, form a refreshing contrast to



the shams of a fashionable society, in which you are sickened with compliments to your face and lied about assiduously behind your back. It is a comfort to find men who have some other religion besides *bienséance*, always provided that the artist has that other religion, otherwise his throwing overboard the *bienséance* is no merit *per se*, but much the reverse. It is very easy to make a mistake that way. I fear a great many of our countrymen do it, and that there is a growing tendency among some classes of them to reason most illogically that, because good manners are sometimes found in connexion with vice and hypocrisy, *therefore* bad manners are a certain index of honesty and virtue. How many of our diplomatic agents, for example, seem to think that it is impossible for an American to show his attachment to republican principles when abroad in any other way than by treading on the toes or spitting in the face of everybody he meets! But here are the verses. 'Hats off in front,' and if we come across anything you don't understand —

'I will not ask you to explain it.' (*Legit Manhattan.*)

Ἰαμεν ἐς Ἀθῆνας. Let us go

To Athens, queenly Athens, violet-crowned,  
The city loved of Pallas, where the gods  
Of art and song gave to their worshippers  
A fuller measure of their inspiration  
Than falls to men in these degenerate days.  
Here is the sculptor's workshop. There he stands,  
King of his art, thrice famous Phidias,  
Whose chisel fashioning Olympian shapes,  
Brought down the deities to lower earth;  
But he has all forgot the mighty gods,  
And he has all forgot his aims divine,  
And prostitutes his skill to baser ends,  
Enshrining courtesans in Parian stone,  
And turning harlots into goddesses.

Who comes? A noble guest. 'Tis Gorgias,  
Athens' most potent burgher; his the boast  
Of wealth inherited in countless store.  
His are the troops of slaves and mines of ore,  
And fertile islands: learning claims he not,  
Nor grace nor goodness; wealth to him is wit,  
Wisdom, and virtue; and because of wealth  
The servile crowd falls down and worships him.



But stay! we need a slight preparative,  
 Should some fair dame peruse this narrative,  
 It were a pity to mislead her,  
 And very possibly the reader  
 Already feels inclined to say  
 That Barrière, when he wrote his play,  
 Either the name on purpose missed, or he  
 Was not well read in Grecian history;  
 Because its pages plain declare  
 That Gorgias was no millionaire.  
 His calling is beyond conjecture or  
 Cavil; he was a public lecturer;  
 And did not make too much by it.  
 His property was chiefly wit;  
 And all through Plato he appears  
 Less like a Rothschild than a Thiers  
 (If the English *mis*-pronunciation  
 Should strike you as an innovation,  
 The rhyme when altered will declare  
 He was no Rothschild but a Thiers).  
 But this is pretty much the quality  
 Of all Parisian classicity.  
 Although their writers we may witty call,  
 They can't be praised for being critical.  
 Nay, when you come to recollect,  
 What better ought you to expect  
 From any race who, to a man,  
 Nickname poor Lucien *Lucy Anne*,  
 And call Pythagoras *Peter Gore*?  
 (A fact Leigh Hunt observed before)  
 So with this error we'll not quarrel,  
 Since it cannot affect the moral,  
 And will admit, ere we begin  
 That Gorgias represents the tin;  
 A man who rolls in countless riches,  
 And spends the same on various ladies;  
 A mode of scattering money which is  
 The shortest way, excepting play,  
 To send a man to Hades.'

'They *do* make pretty wild work with the ancient  
 history here. There was a piece called *Diogène*, I re-  
 collect, in '46, either at the Français or the Odéon.  
 Diogenes is the hero. He, and Pericles, and Demosthenes,



run for Archon on opposition tickets. Aspasia gives a ball in the Periclean interest, and among the evening's entertainments Pindar sings an ode in praise of Alexander the Great.'

'Come now, Bleecker, you must be embroidering. I remember the play, and there was nothing about Pindar or Alexander in it.'

'Well, perhaps I am wrong there; but I'll swear the other details were given 'with the most scrupulous exactness,' as De Morny says to Véron. I wonder how much his endorsement of Véron is worth?'

Now Phidias, we may briefly state,  
Has broken out of bounds of late,  
And in his frantic dissipation  
Has lost all sight of moderation.  
One night he gets 'shiny,' and serenades Phryne,  
Next noon, by Aspasia, he quite set a-fire is,  
And the following day is half mad about Lais,  
Who, as Ovid says, *multis amata was viris*. \*  
And so from morn to night the flat hews  
Till he has chiselled out their statues;  
(A sort of tit for tat, since they  
Have chiselled him for many a day.)  
But, sore oppressed by poverty,  
To Gorgias he has sold the three,  
Who now appears prepared to pay  
The cash, and take the goods away.  
But 'No!' says the sculptor, 'you shall not do so:  
I now choose to keep them, and wont let them go.'  
'We don't stand such nonsense,' says Gorgias, 'no how.  
Deliver the goods, or look out for a row.'  
Belligerent fists upon either side they show,  
To settle the question by *ultima ratio*.  
In the midst of the din  
Comes Diogenes in.

A habit it was of this cynic philosopher  
To the sculptor's establishment often to cross over,  
And though people called him a crazy, untidy ass,  
He was greatly esteemed and regarded by Phidias.

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\* *Qualiter in thalamos formosa Semiramis isse  
Dicitur et multis Lais amata viris.*



To him the question they refer,  
 From his appeal they'll not demur.  
 'Tis truly a very queer case, says Diogenes,  
 'If artists will fall so in love with their progenies.  
 But methinks that before they are taken away,  
 The statues themselves should have something so say.  
 Ask whether or no  
 They're willing to go.'  
 'Very well!' 'Very well!' 'Be it so!' 'Be it so!'  
 'Aspasia, Lais, Phryne, hear! let my devotion move.  
 The artist's chisel gave you life; then give the artist love!  
 The marble limbs are motionless; the marble eyes are dim;  
 The sculptor's tale may nought avail; they will not move  
 for him.  
 'Aspasia, Lais, Phryne, hear! and follow, and be kind,  
 No richer man than Gorgias in Athens shall ye find.  
 Come, sit with me on golden thrones, off jewelled dishes  
 feast;  
 For I can measure purses with the monarchs of the East.'  
 The stony eyeballs gleam with life; the marble limbs unfold,  
 To vivify the courtesan the only charm is gold.  
 'And so ends the prologue. Have you had enough, or  
 shall I go on?'  
 'Give me a number of cigars first, and then start your  
 team.'  
 'Here are some Jenny Linds, and we start again.'  
 Hey presto! Change scenes. To Madrid let us go.  
 'Well, Spain after Athens.' — Dear reader, not so.  
 The Madrid we speak of is on the north side  
 Of the mountains which Spain from its neighbour divide.  
 In short, 'tis a place in the Bois de Boulogne,  
 Which as a Parisian 'Abbey' is known,  
 Where a jolly old Frenchman, named Born, wine and  
 ham sells  
 To sundry gay lions and lark-loving damsels.  
 Notorious characters like Rigolette,  
 And other celebrities there may be met;  
 And here come three ladies, to wit, Juliette,  
 Fædora, and Marco, who sings at the opera;  
 For my part I think it would have been more proper a  
*Danseuse* to have made her, since people do say



That the *rats* are most famous for nibbling away  
 The fortunes of gentlemen rather too gay.  
 'To them' Messrs. Mauleon, Julian, and Francis:  
 The first a professional votary of chance is.  
 In winning and losing he passes the day,  
 Though only with stocks he's accustomed to play;  
 The last a mere fop, who has little to say.  
 But Julian's a regular French Alcibiades,  
 Who likes upon other folks' sofas to lie at ease.  
 Of all men he borrows, makes love to all women,  
 And takes enough wine every evening to swim in;  
 But quizzes and laughs at his friends all the while,  
 With teasing good humour and mischievous smile.  
 So now when the broker looks up from a plateful  
 Of peppery cray-fish to call him ungrateful,  
 Says he, 'My dear sirs, it were too great a platitude  
 Before these fair ladies to talk of ingratitude,  
 They're much better up to the time of the day.'  
 Then, turning to Marco, goes on at so glib a rate  
 As not to give her any time to deliberate  
 Before he proceeds with his truth-telling lay.

'Marco, all our fair excelling,  
 Dost thou love in flowery hall  
 Joyous notes that loudly swelling  
 Bid the dancers join the ball?  
 Dost thou love 'mid evening shadows,  
 Murmurs of the quivering trees,  
 When the poplars o'er the meadows  
 Whisper to the passing breeze?  
 Gently o'er the dewy meadows  
 Whisper to the passing breeze?  
 'No! No! No! No!'  
 What then *dost* thou love, Marco?  
 Not the singing of the thrushes,  
 Nor the streamlet's rippling flow,  
 Nor the sighing of the bushes,  
 Nor the voice of Romeo?

(Then he pulled out his purse, and he jingled the gold,  
 But she never coloured, nor looked the least sold.)

*Here's the noise to please Marco.*

Dost thou love the merry singing,  
 Signal of the revel gay,



When amid the goblets' ringing,  
 Drowning reason floats away?  
 Dost thou love the organs holy,  
 Whence the sacred strains arise,  
 Which, like supplications holy,  
 Mount with incense to the skies?  
 Sound like prayings of the lowly,  
 Mount with incense to the skies?  
 'No! No! No! No!'

(Jingle as before, you know,)

*Here's* the music for Marco.

Dost thou love while careless straying  
 Through the woods without a way,  
 Brazen horns' tumultuous braying  
 Round the gallant stag at bay?  
 Dost thou love when night is falling  
 The sonorous steeple-bell  
 All the scattered flocks recalling  
 To the homes they know so well?  
 From the country round recalling  
 To the homes they know so well?  
 'No! No! for ever No!'  
 Other sounds are all too low;  
*This* alone can reach Marco.'

By the time Mr. Julian has finished his song,  
 A jolly young artist comes loafing along;  
 A nice little fellow yclept *Raphael*,  
 Which name for a painter would do very well;  
 But this a sculptor, who models for pelf  
 And fame — quite a model of virtue himself.  
 He won all the prizes at school, went to Rome  
 To study, now saves up his earnings at home,  
 Takes care of his ma like a dutiful son,  
 And goes to bed early, and does as he's bid.  
 At this stage the reader my possibly wonder by what  
 means he happens to come to Madrid,  
 Which isn't *exactly* the place for a student —  
 I mean one who studies, and does what is prudent.  
 In every large town there are youngsters we know,  
 Called *students*, like *lucus a non lucendo*.  
 (If you blame the wrong accent. my muse will not halt her  
 Course for your blame; I appeal to old Walter



De Mapes; whensoever a good rhyme he wanted, he  
 Never would hesitate long about quantity.  
 And nearer our time there was Dr. Maginn,  
 Who to violate quantity thought it no sin.\*)  
 But still, though his motives are not understood,  
 The cause of his visit was possibly good.  
 He, perchance, went for art (as some of us for liter-  
 ature), to seek models few places are fitter.'

'You may guess what is coming — Jupiter Ammon, if it isn't too bad! The man has fallen asleep. I say, Bleecker, wake up! Is that the way you treat your friends? or did you think you were reading a back number of the *North American*?'

'And is that the way you treat your friends, too. — The fact is, Manhattan, I always said there was opium in those Jenny Linds. Very fine verses, those of yours, all the same — give me an intense desire to hear the original.'

'It's your own loss; just as we were approaching the best part of it; Diogenes — Desgennais, the principal character of the piece — Barrière's great creation, in fact.'

'Oh, I saw enough of him in *Les Parisiens*. A magnificent declaimer against all sorts of vice; wondrous saucy to boot.'

'Theophile Gautier says, that if any man were to talk in society as Desgennais does on the stage, he would be promptly kicked out of doors. All the better, then, that Diogenes should have *some* place where he can speak out without fear of such interruption.'

'But just consider a moment, Frank, if you are not rather behind the age in glorifying the Anglo-Saxons at the expense of the Gauls. Why, man, the Anglo-Saxons, half of them at least, have gone bodily over to the Gauls, horse, foot, and dragoons. The Alliance is the word now. Napoleon III. is the idol of the English pen and people; and since he is the state, and the nation too, here, they must admit all the institutions of the country with him — admit them so far as not to condemn them.

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\* His Latin version of *Chevy Chase*

Has this sort of line in more than one place,  
*Ediderunt stragem plurimam per ordines Anglorum.*  
*Herorum vilas dempserunt non amplius superborum.*



The opposition of Anglo-Saxon and French ideas, sentiments, principles, morals, has already almost receded into the past, unless we have inherited all the family share of the difference.'

'Friend Bleecker, suppose you were in a house on fire, and had no decent pretext for cutting out of the premises, and letting it burn up by itself, — it is probable that you would assist the next man to you in trying to check the conflagration, without waiting to make an elaborate scrutiny of his antecedents. He might be a pick-pocket or a *Sewer* reporter, so long as he helped you to pass buckets and save furniture. France and England are now united in a common cause, by the imperative necessity of self-defence and self-preservation; but as to any fusion or approximation of the ways of thinking between them on social and moral subjects, until such period as the Ethiopian shall change his skin and the leopard his spots, don't you believe it. The present Emperor may be a greater man than all his uncles put together; he may be the greatest man on earth (our people certainly have never been disposed to deny his claims; you recollect it was a countryman of ours, the unlucky Wykoff, who first discovered him, so to speak, and prophesied that the 'Prisoner of Ham,' whom all Europe then considered a most absurd adventurer, would turn out a great man); that doesn't affect the question ultimately. Do you suppose this dynasty is to last for ever? Or that any one man, in the few years that constitute the span of an earthly potentate's reign, can reform and transform the entire character of a people which has taken hundreds of years, and has remained formed pretty much as it now is for hundreds of years? Or is John Bull to become Frenchified in his dotage? I haven't so bad an opinion of the old gentleman.'

'But come, don't you think, candidly between us, that you have too bad an opinion of the French — that you are haunted by old prejudices against them — that it is just possible you may misunderstand them? Confess, even now, that you think a little better of them and their ways than when you knew them less.'

'If we are to reason conversely, judging from the way in which they misunderstand us, I may be far enough out in my reckoning; but with increased experience of



the people, my opinion of them remains much the same — only rather more so — as our western men say. Doubtless there are several leaves which we might take from their book with great advantage. I believe that the intellectual training of their young men has been much underrated by the English, and far from fully appreciated by the Americans. I admit that they are much more agreeable and amusing companions than we, on short acquaintance at least; and that their conversational powers are justly admired by ladies. We have a different theory in this matter; we believe that a man who talks a great deal will be apt to talk either a great deal of nonsense — which is useless, or a great deal of personality — which is dangerous. But after all it is a question of comparison; probably the English consider us as over-talkative as we do the French. Let us own, too, that in temperance and frugality they are vastly superior to us (the fact is worth noticing, were it only to show that temperance, in its modern technical sense, is not the parent and source of all other virtues, but is perfectly compatible with numerous vices and basenesses). But, without dwelling on minor faults, there are two huge blots on the French character which must render it hateful to us, so long as virtue and honour have any real meaning of themselves, independent of time, place, and custom. One is, its inability to appreciate female virtue and domestic happiness — two things, we may remark, which have gone hand in hand with constitutional liberty ever since the days when Tacitus wrote his *Germania*, and Catullus his *Epithalamium* of Manlius and Julia. We need not dwell upon this — we need not stop to discuss the *tu-quoque* system of answering the charge — the appeal to individual instances elsewhere, or to the statistical records of other countries. We both know that there is an awful amount of vice in London and in New York, as well as in Paris; and we know too the different conditions under which it exists; that in the former cities vice bears on its brow the stamp of social degradation, and hides itself in holes and corners; that here it stalks out in the broad sunlight, and disputes the ground with virtue, and rather elbows it out of place. Enough of that. The other feature of the Gallic character even more antipathetic to ours, is their



small regard of truth. This is a propensity that grows up with them, inculcated by one generation on the succeeding. You remember probably, in *Villette*, how the school-girls used to confess, as a perfect matter of course and a venial peccadillo, *J'ai menti plusieurs fois*. There is no woman who, at any period of her life, has had experience of a French school, either as pupil or teacher, but can testify to the truth of this picture. There is no man with similar experience but can endorse the statement as equally applicable to the other sex; and this, too, is a 'slave's vice.' Observe two men in blouses quarrelling. Count how many times they give each other the lie. Two Englishmen or Americans of the corresponding class would have pitched into each other before they had exchanged the epithet three times; but the Frenchman does not feel the insult in the same degree. Look at their ideal heroes. In this very last piece of young Dumas, *Le Demi-Monde* — that all Paris goes to see, and all the critics are in ecstasies over — one of the principal characters is held up as a striking example of an *homme d'honneur* — always talking and bragging about it too; how does he show his honour at the conclusion? By telling an immense lie, and acting it out to the smallest details, his justification being, that he thereby takes in another liar — diamond cut diamond — there's a hero for you! Some people will tell you that this little failing is a necessary adjunct of French politeness, which is to be accepted as the set-off to it. Miserable error! True politeness may often require a man to hold his tongue — it never requires him to utter a falsehood!

'Bless me, Manhattan, what a Diogenes in patent leathers you are becoming! It's as good as a sermon to hear you, and very consolatory — especially after reading Barnum's *Autobiography*, and a few numbers of *The Sewer* and *The Jacobin*.'

'An unfortunate and puzzling parenthesis that of yours! But I fancy we can give them a few such points and beat them yet; and it does me good to let off steam thus once in a while, if it be only to make a profession of faith, and to show that, though we may have dallied for a time in the enchanted cave, we have not eaten so much of the lotus but that we can arise when the need



comes, and shake off the dust of our feet against this paradise of vanities, and go forth out of it into a world of earnest and serious men.'

'Amid a great confusion of metaphor and illustration. After that we must go and dine at the *Café Voisin*.'

## APROPOS OF "RACHEL AND THE NEW WORLD."

"Spirit of the Times", July 1856.

WE like contrast. It is the main principle and theory of our contributions to the "Spirit." In accordance with this principle we sit down on the fourth of July to give whomever it may concern the butt end of our mind touching M. Leon Beauvallet and his book. The greatest of days, and the meanest of men. There is a good contrast to begin with.

Our country has been blessed! with a great variety of travellers and tourists, of all sorts and nations, and difference of fitness for their self-imposed task of deciding and discussing our manners and institutions. Beauvallet in one or two points was qualified for the task beyond all his predecessors.

In the first place, he understood just one word, and no more, of our language. This gives peculiar value to his explanations, as, for instance, when he informs his countrymen that *cammillia* is the English for camelia.

Secondly, he had made up his mind, before coming to America, that everything in it must be perfectly detestable.

But if so, naturally exclaims the reader, why did he come here at all? Ah, why indeed? *Quis expedit psittaco suum chaire?* quoth Persius (we give timely warning that, having been bitten by Jules Janin, we intend in this article to discharge a vast superfluity of quotation upon society.) The one word of English which Beauvallet understood was *dollar*. America to him, like England to Dr. Wagner, was "only to be valued for her money." Probably he was not the only one in the Felix



company (they turned out anything but a *happy* family in the end) who entertained the same opinion.

But Beauvallet had other qualifications. America must present to any Frenchman, seeing it for the first time, a strange contrast to his customary associations. The best educated Parisian, the most worldly-wise gentleman of the *Faubourg St. Germain*, must find many things to surprise, mystify, and annoy him. A country which you enter without passports, and inhabit without fogs; men who assemble in huge crowds daily, and keep order without the presence of soldiers, and almost without the presence of policemen; politicians who can support the government without being paid for it, and abuse it without being imprisoned or exiled; editors who publish without caution-money or censors; a whole society which, being perfectly free to spend its Sunday as it chooses, goes to church, instead of to a theatre or to a horse-race; a population which finds baths a necessity, and an opera a superfluity; bad coffee and good cigars; spirited horses driven without half a yard of curb-bit, and gentlemen who drive them without a rear guard of two flunkies, married women who love their husbands, and who do not love indecent conversation; young girls who are not shut up in convents, but allowed to go about freely in good society — just as if every man in good society was not an unprincipled and dangerous character where women are concerned; all these things, and a thousand more, so shock his old ideas that he may well be pardoned for feeling uncomfortable.

Beauvallet was not an educated Frenchman (every educated Frenchman, now-a-days, knows a little English — unless, indeed, he happen to be a literary man,) still less a French gentleman. He was a third or fourth-rate actor, who had never attained celebrity, or filled an important *role* on the boards of any Parisian theatre. He had hung on the skirts of people really great in his calling; he knew some low literary men, like Roger de Beavoir (a person chiefly notorious for his perpetual squabbles and lawsuits with his wife); he had frequented second-class restaurants such as *Vachette's* and *Bonvalet's*, places much patronised by *rapins* out on a holiday, and the inferior grade of Lorettes, and which he apostrophizes as a real epicure might *Philippe's* or the *Voisin*. In short,



he was a thorough specimen of a French Cockney and snob. He saw in the papers that "Rachel was going among the savages," and took it all for granted beforehand. His barbarian experiences begin as soon as he goes to sea. "Eight bells" are to him the most idiotic of absurdities; the gong for dinner is absolute heathenism. The steamer pitches and rolls in the most absurd way, as if on purpose to disconcert the illustrious voyager. Still amid all his tribulations it is gratifying to find that his finer sentiments are unimpaired. We have a touching little illustration of this. The ship's calf dies, and is thrown overboard. Beauvallet bewails his untimely fate in accents of genuine sympathy.

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind."

When the voyage was ended, B.'s troubles had only begun. By a striking manifestation of poetic justice, he who had come to bleed the Yankees falls at once into the clutches of a New York hackman, probably the most rapacious species of the genus extortioner on record, except all the inhabitants of Marseilles, and the ordinary Italian Custom House officer — *Douanierius Italicus, Domesticus*, as Janin would say. He then goes to a French hotel, and by a natural sequence finds the American cooking very bad. As a general rule, everything American is bad, because it is different from Paris. One saving clause there is, though he will not allow even this to be such. He discovers hundreds of prostitutes. He must have felt as much at home as the Englishman who arrived in a foggy country.

The Rachel campaign is opened, and the audience buy books of the play with parallel translations. Here, of course, is an opportunity for enlarging on the ignorance of the Americans, who do not understand French sufficiently to follow a play without books.

Now to take a broad and serious view of this mighty subject, (though, to be sure, to talk of anything *serious* where Beauvallet is concerned is a joke in itself), the American audience did exactly what audiences of all countries do when they go to hear foreign players. The only marked exception is in the case of opera, and that simply because the stock pieces of any operatic establishment are not numerous, and are well known to the ordinary frequenters of it. When a new Italian opera



of any mark appears, be it in London or Paris, there is a very general purchasing of *libretti* with parallel translations. The Parisians did the very same thing, too, when Ristori appeared among them; *parantes oidamen* (as Janin would say again), we saw it with our own eyes. The fact is, that to follow a play on the stage requires not only a *knowledge* of, but a very familiar *acquaintance* with, the language in which it is written, as any one who remembers his first visit to a German or Italian theatre can bear us witness. In many instances it requires an acquaintance with a great deal more than the language — with the habits and familiar sayings of the people. Thus no one could understand the joke in Dumas Jr.'s *Demi Monde*, about *la tour prends garde* unless he was well up in the French nursery songs.

The idea that no Americans understand French is about on a par with the almost equally prevalent one on our side that no Frenchmen understand English, while, in fact, it is very generally taught, at present, to the better classes in France. Take five young men of the Jockey Club, and it is safe betting that three of them speak tolerable English. The error on both sides has the same twofold origin; it is partly anachronism, supposing the state of things which existed two generations ago to be prolonged until the present time; and it partly arises from the unfortunate fact that a certain class of literary men in each country, who ought to be the best acquainted with each other's languages respectively, are about the worst acquainted with them of any tolerably decent classes in the two communities.

Returning to our traveller, we find him equally severe on us because *Lecoupreur* was spelt *Lacoupreur* in the play bills. Considering that the first newspapers in Paris, such as "La Presse," can rarely set up one sentence in English without making more than one blunder in spelling it; that in the Emperor's works there occur orthographical errors in English names (as we can testify from our own observation); that another illustrious person, no less than Beauvallet himself, cannot write the name of an ordinary flower in English without two mistakes; in view of all this, he need not have been *quite* so hard on our printers. Some one has naively asked, Could not Beauvallet have corrected the proof himself?



*Pas si bete.* He was not going to lose a whole paragraph of jokes on Yankee ignorance.

Certainly the setting up of French type is not the strongest point of the great Anglo-Saxon race. We remember a ludicrous instance which occurred in London. The French company there were bringing out Mme. de Girardin's play, *La Joie fait Peur* (Joy causes Fear). The printers persisted in rendering the last word *Pure* (Joy Makes Pure). Being much expostulated with, they made another effort, and finally printed it *Puer*, producing an untranslatable title which would have answered for the theatre *delle Antiche Stinche* at Florence.

This London version of Madame de Girardin was very possibly known to Beauvallet. It was quite current in Paris two seasons ago, and as these things circulate fast (they are precisely the sort of matters which the Parisian public is allowed to discuss and competent to understand), it might well have gone down as low as his set. But it wouldn't do to say anything just now against "our allies." He is very discreet in the few remarks he has to make about England. All his wrath is reserved for the New Yorkers, who did not receive (or pay) Rachel as they did Jenny Lind. "So much the worse," says he, with an *ex cathedra* air of Minos, Rada-manthus, and Æacus, rolled into one, and a Pope thrown in, "so much the worse for the Americans." Now that the Iron Duke is dead, Jenny Lind is the greatest existing thorn in the side of the French. She is the slave in their chariot, the *amari aliquid* that rises up in their cups amid Sebastopol triumphs and Exhibition splendors. A great singer who *won't* come to Paris! They would give one of their best victories, or finest shows, to have her there, just for the pleasure of *not* receiving her well. It is really a national question with them; we never yet met a Frenchman, whether he had ever heard her or not, whether he knew anything about music or not, with whom it was not an article of religion that she *couldn't* be a great artist — it was impossible in the nature of things. Moreover, when you tell a Frenchman that part of the enthusiasm which welcomed Jenny Lind here was due to her moral antecedents, you are talking more Greek to him than all Janin's scholarship can translate. For if there is anything more incredible and impossible to a



Parisian than that any woman (especially any artist) should have any moral character at all, it is that any public should care ten cents whether she has or not. So absurd does the reason assigned appear to him, that he will actually take the trouble to ransack our barbarous annals, and finding therein that some eighteen years ago Fanny Elssler caused a great sensation here, he claps his hands triumphantly, and thinks he has found an unanswerable *reductio ad absurdum*. We have heard this reception of Fanny Elssler so often brought up as an insurmountable argument on the subject that we shall take the trouble of going into a brief digression respecting it.

The American public was much greener then than now in such matters. Elssler was the first great chore-graphic artist (if that be the proper expression) who visited our shores. She came with a great professional European reputation; various places in Germany and Italy had committed absurdities about her nearly equal to those which marked her progress here. Several Americans abroad, some of them in diplomatic positions, had given her letters of introduction. As such letters with us are something more than the mere form which they usually are in Europe, and are regarded with reference more to the *giver* than the *presenter* of them, so as to make "the flag cover the goods," they opened the very best society to the *danseuse*. We are far from approving of the conduct of those who gave the letters, but we say they are to blame, not those who received them. In fact, Elssler's succes was owing to a variety of causes — we had nearly forgotten that she was patronized by the celebrity who first discovered Louis Napoleon, and afterwards revived (with the modern improvements) the old Scandinavian system of courtship — and it is likely to remain a unique phenomenon. If any of the crack dancers of the day, Rosati, for instance, were to come over now with the expectation of being received as Elssler was, we fancy she would have no better consolation than that which "one of the most remarkable men" out West offers to his political opponent. "At any rate, she will have tried an experiment."

Popular and lucrative to a considerable extent the ballet will probably always be in our large cities, but



this is far from being an American peculiarity. If, as we ourselves believe, the admiration of public dancers is one of the barbarisms of civilization, it is a barbarism of which Brother Jonathan has by no means the monopoly. Every fashionable European capital has the same weakness. In Paris (the only place in the world according to Beauvallet), the finest opera is considered incomplete without its allowance of dances, sometimes introduced into the body of the piece, sometimes violently intercalated between the acts. There is always a large portion of the audience who only appear when the ballet begins. The last director (Janin's friend Rocoplan, *alias* Roqueplan,) mutilated "Der Freischutz" to make a *curtain raiser* or prologue for a second rate ballet.

The receipts of Rachel's first night did not amount to one-third those of Jenny Lind's. All other reasons apart, Beauvallet himself has given one which alone would be fully sufficient to account for it. The seats were not sold at auction; even had the theatre been *more than full* (as he also confesses) it could not have held half Barnum's amount. Yet so predisposed to blame is he, that *because that did not happen which he has himself shown could not possibly have happened*, he falls foul of the American public; "of course, he is speaking only of the masses," who, he adds, in another place, "are unintelligent and gross in the United States, as they are everywhere else." He thinks it very grand to talk thus of the masses. It is vastly aristocratic, sets him up in society at once, and gives him position as a fine gentleman. So Jeames Yellowplush, mounting majestically behind the Marquis of Carabas' carriage, looks down with complacency on the gorgeous splendors of his breeches and the gracefully swelling rotundity of his sliken-clad calves, and turns up his nose at the "common people," those "orrid vulgar wretches without refinement." Oh! Beauvallet, Jeames Beauvallet, this is language for your masters. Silly enough in their mouths, it is at least consistent; in yours it is the most inconsequent of absurdities. You know very well, in your own heart, that you are nothing but a poor (in every sense) player, without standing or consequence of any sort, that you would go down on your knees to the vilest adventurer in the imperial circle, lick De Morny's patent-leathers, kiss Fleury's coat-tails, and worship, not



Catalani's, but Bajocchi's pantaloons;\* that you would jump out of your skin with joy on receiving a command to perform before their Majesties. What business have you to put on the Grand Seigneur in talking of the masses of any country? What are you yourself but one of the masses — only without the M?

To be sure, he adds a saving clause and allows it this time. "There is a class who are intelligent, educated, even artistic; it comprises *all* the members of the American press." Well, thought we, this fellow does nothing by halves, certainly, and we turned the next page fully expecting to find that there were no gentlemen in America, except all the members of Congress.

In a letter to that worthy, Roger de Beauvoir, Beauvallet disburthens himself of a portion of his sorrows. Here he is eloquent on the subject of brawls and assassinations, and people shot in the streets, a subject to which he often reverts in subsequent pages. Now, far be it from us to maintain that our American cities generally, and New York particularly, are under the best possible municipal government. There *are* Europeans who have a right to throw stones at us. But before any Frenchman undertakes to project any missiles our way, he should consider the extreme fragility and vitreosity of his own habitation. Where was Beauvallet in June '48, and December '51? Was he hid in the cellar with M. Prudhomme? Did he hear of any people being shot in the streets at those times in or about Paris? Was he ever out a night in the winter of '52, say from January to March? We can tell him, and whoever else it may concern, that it was not safe to pass after dark through any street in which there was a sentinel — that is to say, three-fourths of the streets in Paris. One of these functionaries shot down a young man in the *Rue Richelieu*, because *another* young man had blackguarded him some hours before. We have a very distinct recollection how, returning home from a dinner party in the "small hours," we came much nearer than was agreeable to being shot, solely because we were in a street near the *Elysee* — a street, he it observed, in no way closed to the public by legal or official notice. To be sure, we *might* have

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\* "And worship Catalani's pantaloons," — *Byron*.



been out at that time for improper purposes, and the present dynasty is *so* moral. We must also do the sentinels the justice to say that, after holding a council of war to the number of five over us, and ascertaining that we lived in that quarter, and could not get home any other way without going nearly a mile round, they positively did not shoot us; nay more, they absolutely permitted us to pass straight on without going a mile out of our way. "The French are a very polite people." (*Vide* "Peter Parley" and other nursery books.)

But these were revolutionary times. How is it now? Last winter a cabman deliberately murdered a passenger for having made him refund forty cents overcharge. Soon after a house porter knocked down and killed his mistress for scolding him. These, indeed, were men of the masses, "who are unintelligent and gross everywhere." But about the same time a young man in a perfectly respectable position quietly shot down his father-in-law after breakfast. Now fancy a foreigner generalizing on the state of Parisian society from these examples.

Everything in New York is utterly detestable to our traveller; even the wonderfully ludicrous phenomenon of a ferry-boat, large enough to hold a carriage and horses, fails to draw more than a passing smile from him. The company go to Boston, which he decidedly prefers to New York. The American Athens must feel highly flattered. His return was coincident with another great event, the arrival of Jules Janin's article, which turned the whole city upside down; every one was talking of it. How Beauvallet found this out with his limited knowledge of the language he does not inform us; but *if* the Yankees were "furious against him" they might have been quite frantic against Janin, whose re-published article is decidedly *the* feature of the book. Janin is a thorough blackguard, but a clever one; whatever he writes is sure to be readable, and much of it is sure to be amusing. He was originally a schoolmaster, and brought into his second profession much of the stock in trade of his first. His pages fairly bristle with classical quotations, so that you may tell one of his productions across the room by the italics in it. But the accuracy of his learning by no means equals its extent. Even that shallow ass, Roqueplan, got the better of him on some minor points



of grammar. As a writer, his career has been more lucrative than honorable. It is impossible to have much respect for a man who has taken black mail from actresses, and done up his own wedding night in a feuilleton. He is particularly great at "pitching into" people. His last grand exploit of the sort was in 1852, when, in spite of the grammatical errors aforesaid, he made an example of manager Roqueplan.

Janin was not always so ill disposed towards us. Some twelve or fifteen years ago he actually wrote a book ("The American in Paris") in collaboration with one of those Democrats whom he now stigmatizes as savages. But allowances must be made for the poor man's circumstances. He is an Orleanist, opposed to the present dynasty, which has moreover mercilessly curtailed his loved quotations, the Imperial censorship having discovered much treason in Tacitus. He could not console himself by abusing *Perfide Albion*, for Albion is now an ally of Gaul, and the docile French press must speak of her discreetly. Russia had been worn threadbare, and only America was left to assail.

He proves on first principles that the Americans cannot understand or appreciate tragedy, because they are "essentially democratic," and tragedy belongs to courts. The first court that encouraged it was that of Athens! Is the man trying to impose on his readers, or is he merely, like Mr. Pecksniff, using fine words without being particular as to their meaning? The Court of Athens, the fierce democracy that would hardly brook any government at all, that ground down its wealthy citizens with impositions, and forced contributions to an extent that would have gladdened the cockles of Proudhon's heart, and made Greeley smile (in the Spiritual sense), were such a thing possible. Of course there were rich men and exclusives in Athens, as there must be in all cities, but does J. J. seriously believe that none but the *Kalokagathæ* and the *charientes*, the "Upper Ten" of the place, went to hear Sophocles? Has he forgotten that the "masses" of Athens took to these things as naturally as the meanest Italian peasant now-a-days does to music — that they were so skilled in rhythm and declamation as to detect instantaneously a misplaced accent in a speech? Has he ever counted the Democratic



claptraps in a Greek play, where the author was "writing for the galleries?" We can show him a nice little list of them. These courts have "delicate tongues, which regard the slightest innovation as a crime." We could give some illustrative examples of that too. Does Janin remember how the gender of *Carosse* came to be changed? How that great King, Louis XIV., when a little boy, once asked for his coach in a hurry, and called it by mistake *mon carosse*, and how, as whatever the King did must be right, the word became masculine forthwith, and remained so from that time? Does he remember how the verb *to esteem* acquired a peculiar technical meaning in French fashionable society, which, for a time, supplanted all its legitimate signification? (Our virtuous editor might find the anecdote at length a thought too spicy for his columns, but we have seen it quoted in very grave books, *Mill's Logic* for one).

But are we no less unable to appreciate the *thoughts* than the *words* of tragedy. Here, in default of first principles or personal experience, the critic falls back on the authority of (O, shades of Pinto, Munchausen, and Gulliver!) Mme. Fontenay. American women cannot understand love scenes, because "their loves are as silent as the tomb." It is not written in the gospel according to St. Fontenay? Certainly a French woman's loves are not as silent as the tomb, nor a Frenchman's either. He would not give five francs for the most beautiful creature in the world unless he could go out into the street the next day and talk about it. The first Frenchman we ever knew (and he was not the worst of the lot by a long chalk) used to astonish us by asking with great pretence of mystery, "Do they talk much about me and Mrs. So and So?" We were astonished at it in those days. We were very green; we had not seen much of *la grande nation*.

The Americans, quoth J. J., can take no interest in the ancients, because Greek princesses did not ride in the laps of strange men in omnibuses (neither do American young ladies, we beg leave to assure any stray foreigner who may chance to come across our remarks). Astyanax in New York would have paid board to his mother, and the "unterrified" would have given three groans for Agamemnon, king of kings. (Here Janin mixes



up Scripture and Classics in a ludicrous way. Homer calls Agamemnon "king of *men*" [*anax andron*]. The other expression belongs to a book which J. J.'s countrymen know too little about.)

It is always easy to create fun by transferring the habits of one age to another. Put a helmet on Mr. Fillmore, or give an umbrella to Hannibal crossing the Alps, and you have a standing joke ready made. But did it ever occur to the critic that he might be paid off in his own coin, and *tu-quoque* ed to any extent? Did Electra wear a bustle and a hoop-petticoat and a bonnet on the back of her head? Did Andromache have a wet-nurse for little Astyanax? Did Helen pension off Menelaus with a foreign embassy, and continue herself to occupy the family mansion at Mycenæ, with Paris living in a nice little *pavillon* alongside her, and both of them received in the best Argive society? Was Nausicaa shut up in a convent, or was she *horriblement compromise* by meeting Ulysses on the sea-shore? But here, perhaps, Janin might tell us that he was not talking of the *ancient* Greeks at all, but of the *French* Greeks, as represented in French tragedy; and then, indeed, we should not know what to say, for Corneille's princesses are about as much like Greek women as J. J. and L. B. themselves are like a couple of Athenian *Kalokagathæ*.

But if he will allow us to stick to the *Greek* Greeks, we can go on with our incompatibilities for hours. How many Athenian tragedies could be represented unmutilated on the French stage? What would the police say to this line from Sophocles' "Antigone?"

"That is no state where only one man rules."  
or to this from Æschylus, "Agamemnon?"

"For Death's a milder fate than tyranny."

How could an audience of French functionaries, that had sworn, unsworn, and re-sworn away what little faith they may have started in life with, listen understandingly to the inspired Princess talking of that "higher law" which is not of yesterday or the day before, but from everlasting, and which never grows old by time? What kind of points a French theatre can appreciate we know by experience. One night at the *Français* — Rachel's own theatre, the great temple of the tragic muse — there



was, besides the regular legitimate drama, a new farce by Scribe. One of the characters is a gentleman who can never make up his mind till it is too late. To illustrate this he tells how, after '48, he could not decide between the different political parties for a long while; finally he declared for the Republic — *the night before the 2d of December*. This was a great joke, and a laugh went all round the house. We had seen many things in France that made us melancholy, not the less so because some of them were counted by some people amusing; but of all the sights we ever saw — the mad mechanical dancers in the public gardens, the painted harlots lolling in gilded equipages, and thrusting honest women out of the best places, the insolence of Jacks-in-office, the despair of honest men, the utter want of faith, and truth, and honor, throughout all classes — nothing made us feel so profoundly sad as the spectacle of a people jesting over the grave of their liberties.

One really is inclined to wonder that Janin, before writing about America, did not seek to procure some more authentic information on the subject. Perhaps his ignorance of the language may have been in his way. It certainly is extraordinary how little the literary men of France have done to keep up with the progress made in this respect by other classes of the country. Setting aside some brilliant exceptions, such as Guizot and John Lemoine, they treat the English tongue as if it were some barbarous dialect, and seldom allude to it except for purposes of ridicule. Their ignorance may best be measured by the small amount of knowledge required to impose upon them. A vagabond Frenchman, who once infested this country, and who could never put an entire sentence of our language together correctly, is now considered quite an English authority in Paris, and actually engaged in translating American stories for French papers.

But had Janin no resources in his own language? Were not Chevallier and De Tocqueville as much worth consulting as Mme. Fontenay?

Finally, on this matter of appreciation we should like to ask this critic a few plain and serious questions. Was Rachel in the habit of playing to 25,000 francs, or 20,000 either, in Paris? Was she not frequently obliged



to leave the Capital because she could draw better houses in other countries? Did not at least three-fourths of the Parisian press and public always abuse her on these occasions for looking after her own interest? Lastly, did not this same press and public *invent* (to use one of their own pet expressions) a new tragedian on purpose to spite Rachel for leaving them? Did they not take up Ristori — an excellent actress, doubtless, but probably no better than ten or fifteen other women who might be picked out from the Italian and German boards — and set her up as a rival, nay a superior to their own great artist?

So much for M. Janin, of whom we merely observe in conclusion that he is so badly posted up on the Homeric controversy as not to know that the *Will of Jove*, not the *Wrath of Achilles*, is the key-note of the "Iliad," and that the swift-footed son of Peleus and the king of men (not of kings), and all the great chiefs, were but puppets in the hands of Zeus.

From Beauvallet's experiences of the Southern States we can only extract one gem, elicited by Rachel's reading Cooper while ill at Philadelphia. "We expected to see statues of Cooper in all public places. Statues to an author in America! They do not even read his works. That is a literary fact [!] Americans do not read — they count. They find that more instructive." This is a pregnant paragraph. It suggests several pertinent questions, as, for instance, in what public square of Paris one may find a statue of Victor Hugo. What sort of reception the stranger would be likely to meet who should enquire for *Les Chatiments*, or *Napoleon le Petit*, at any French bookseller's. But we prefer to speak of his sneer at the money-making propensities of our countrymen — a sneer repeated in several other places. There is a class of Frenchmen from whom we can understand such language. The descendants of the old aristocracy deem themselves a peculiar people; they have a proverb of their own; *noblesse oblige*. What their nobility obliges them to do it sometimes puzzles an unsophisticated republican to discover. It does not oblige them not to insult the wife of any foreigner who is green enough to give them the run of his house. It does not oblige them to hesitate at telling any number of lies when they have anything



to get by it. It does not oblige them not to sponge upon any one who will entertain them without ever making any return. It does not oblige them to pay their bets when they lose (*probatum est*). But it does oblige them not to engage in any regular legitimate traffic. A French nobleman may che — we beg pardon, *be lucky* — at cards, or speculate on a race, or marry a *parvenue* heiress (which operation he calls in his elegant diction *manuring his lands*), he may even marry an American girl, if she has tin enough, though not brought up according to Parisian notions of *bienseances*; but he may not be a merchant or a banker, and can therefore, not exactly with propriety, but with perfect consistency, laugh at the money-making cit. But coming from Beauvallet, this language is the hugest of absurdities. It is the one thing more ridiculous than his talk about the masses. Why, what under God's heaven brought the man here but money? He came to a country which he detested, to a people whom he regarded as savages. Was it to reform and civilize them by his example? The missionary did not even attempt to master the speech of the barbarians. Was it because his presence was necessary to sustain Rachel and M. Felix? Even he will hardly have the impudence to say that. What then was the motive? *Rem quocumque modo rem*. The 20,000 solid reasons set forth in the contract.

"*Gallulus* esuriens in cœlum, jusseris, ibit" — the English of which is that Beauvallet wanting money came to the United States.

Not sorry, however, is he to get out of them, and to find in Cuba two darling institutions of his native land, passports and soldiers. Still more pleased is he when the Havanese Sunday arrives. "Thank Heaven this day is not spent here as in the United States. Very different!" And so, wishing to pass his Sunday in a pious and rational manner, Beauvallet goes to a cock-fight. We need not be surprised at him, if the French Minister could find no better pastime for *his* Washington Sundays than shooting cats out of a back window. (*Historic*, as L. B. modestly says of his own assertions).

Before taking leave of this book (on the narrative of which we have gone into no details, for everybody has doubtless read it by this time; our people are so weakly curious to see themselves abused,) we wish to



say a few words about the translation. It has been much praised, and in one sense deservedly. The spirit of the original is very well rendered, and it is extremely hard to translate light French writing without letting the *esprit* (and even a tenth-rate Frenchman like Beauvallet has some *esprit*) evaporate in the translation. No one knows how hard it is who has not tried, and here the work deserves all the praise it has received. But in the minor matters of grammar and idiom it is frequently inaccurate, so that the author is sometimes made to utter even greater nonsense than he means. Thus on the very second page, "at four in the morning we could have landed at Havre, where I caught," &c. *Could have*, used thus independently, is not English. Probably (for we have not seen the original, the French expression was *nous pouvions*, we were able to arrive, or we managed to arrive. So again at p. 220. "They deny that a married woman may behave badly. What Beauvallet makes the Americans deny is not the *possibility* but the *permissibility* of a woman's misconduct. "They say that a married woman *ought not* to behave badly," or better, "they *will not allow* a married woman," &c. This is obvious from the antithetical clause, "but as for the young girls, they may do whatever enters their heads." Sometimes also he mistranslates particular words, as when he talks of the "loungers in white vests" who throng Broadway. Obviously Beauvallet wrote *vestes blanches*. *Vest* is a sort of gents or English ~~fine~~ waistcoat. *Veste* in French means either a boysjacket or a man's morning coat. *Vestes blanches* are white *coats*, such as no one in Europe ever wears except possibly some stray lion at a watering-place; they would naturally be quite a phenomenon to the Parisian cockney.

And now perhaps the reader may ask, why should you notice this person at all? Why build up a big wheel in several columns of the "Spirit" to break this insignificant bug upon? A very proper question, friend reader, and thus we answer it. It was not for Beauvallet, but for what he suggests. "Snobs," says their sage historian, "are a part of the beautiful," and their study is most instructive. Especially for this reason. Any unfavorable national traits, any pretty little foibles of the people at large, are sure to be intensified in the snob. Thus the English snob is eminent for servility to those



above, and brutality to those below him; the American ditto for recklessness, braggadocio, and vulgar curiosity; the French ditto for immorality, falsehood, and skepticism; and so on to the end of the chapter. The caricature assists us to judge of the original. Our actor is a snob; the Duke de Quelquechose is a gentleman (according to the Parisian idea of one), but the Duke and the actor are both Frenchmen. We are no patent patriots, no indiscriminate admirers of everything at home. Often (we say it both in sorrow and in anger) have we been prouder of our country than at the present moment. But whatever be our faults and follies, we are not likely to profit much politically, morally, socially, or even æsthetically, by study and imitation of the Gallic type. And this is the moral of Beauvallet. *Requiescat in Paris.*

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## ERRATA.

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- Page 38, line 27, after "are" add "particularly".
- " 35, line 14, for "gives as" read "gives us".
- " 147, line 81, for "a comparison" read "or comparison".
- " 161, line 21, for "impissated" read "inspissated".
- " 168, last line but two, for "to prevail" read "should prevail".
- " 169, first line, for "captial" read "capital".
- " 171, Title (and also in Table of Contents) for "Talę" read "Talk".
- " 195, Title, for "Fanity" read "Vanity". *Note*, line 8 for "bray" read "brag", for "natural" read "national"; line 5 for "Pantagraet" read "Pantagruel"; line 12 for "*sonles*" read "*Contes*".
- " 198, line 12, for "Macaulay" read "Macaulay".
- " 216, 8 lines from foot, for "Mollossus" read "Molossus".
- " 235, line 22, for "never have" read "never had".
- " 237, 18 lines from foot, for "corresponding in" read "corresponding to".
- " 242, 8 lines from foot, for "taste, ornament in manners" read "taste in ornament, manners".
- " 251, 11 lines from foot, for "par sang" read "pur sang".
- " 257, 6 lines from foot, omit "and the Tenth Satire of Juvenal"; 5 lines from foot, omit "Book and the Sixth Satire".
- " 259, line 7, for "came" read "come".
- " 261, 8 lines from foot, for "*in any case*" read "*in my case*".
- " 279, 4 lines from foot, after "sounds" add "in our language"; last line for "once" read "one".
- " 282, 10 lines from foot, for "our *p*" read "one *p*".
- " 283, Title (and also in Table of Contents) for "SOPHOKLES" read "SOPHOCLES".
- " 287, line 28, for "he expected" read "be expected".
- " 288, line 11, for "kallow" read "hallow".
- " 296, 16 lines from foot, for "*chère*" read "*cher*"; 12 lines from foot for "truck" read "track".
- " 297, 8 lines from foot, for "appreciation" read "appreciator".
- " 298, line 12, for "to obsolete" read "to be obsolete".



Page 303, line 22, for "epris the resenative" read "is the representative".

- " 326, lines 7 and 8 from foot, divide the lines thus,  
"At this stage the reader may possible wonder by what means he happens to come to Madrid".
- " 337, 11 lines from foot, for "sliken-clad" read "silken-clad".
- " 346, line 27, for "gents or English fine waistcont" read "*gents* English for waistcoat"; line 30 for "even" read "ever".

There are several other typographical errors, particularly in punctuation, and in French words; thus *écrevisse* is invariably misspelt wherever it occurs. The author's unavoidable absence from Baden while the greater part of the first volume and the whole of the second were passing through the press accounts for these numerous mistakes.

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1912



**PIECES**

OF A

**BROKEN-DOWN CRITIC.**

**PICKED UP BY HIMSELF.**



---

**Vol. II. ORIGINAL VERSES AND VERSE TRANSLATIONS.**

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**BADEN-BADEN.**

**PRINTED BY SCOTZNIOVSKY.**









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**1858.**



1873, May 26.

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Sam'l A. Green, M.D.

of Boston.

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## ORIGINAL VERSES.

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### HOW THE TWINS PAID THEIR POET.

Literary World, June 1861.

---

PRINCE Scopas the Thessalian  
Is holding festival,  
And subject guests and stranger guests  
Throng endlessly his hall.  
His coursers in the chariot-race  
Have gained the victory.  
Great Creon's son the prize hath won;  
A happy man is he!  
Break out in jocund shout and song!  
Let all the world be gay!  
For Scopas of a noble line  
Holds noble feast to-day!

The odor of the banquet  
Is scented miles about;  
The plumage of the slaughtered birds  
Has paved the street without;\*  
The cement of the oldest jars  
Is loosened to supply  
The wine that cheers the drooping heart,  
And lifts the spirits high;  
No fish that swims in sea or stream  
But helps to grace the board.  
The King can show no richer cheer,  
Rich Persia's potent lord.

There is many a famous jester  
To aid the mirth to-day,  
And many a ready piping-girl  
Who Lydian airs can play,

---

\* Fish and game were the staples of an æsthetic Greek banquet, and it was customary to scatter the feathers of all the birds killed before the door, in ostentation of the good things within.



And many a wondrous dancer  
 Whose feet in endless maze,  
 Gliding through labyrinthine steps,  
 Elude the keenest gaze,  
 And who in witching pantomime  
 Can every legend show,  
 And type the love of Gods above  
 To mortals here below.  
 The lovely Ariadne now  
 Shall her presentment find,  
 And draw another Bacchus down  
 To mix with human kind.

The four victorious coursers  
 Are led in triumph round;  
 Their headbands are all golden,  
 Their manes with ribands bound.  
 Four coursers they of snowy white,  
 And sprung (so poets told)  
 From those famed horses Harpy-born,  
 Achilles drove of old;  
 And had they uttered mortal speech,  
 As Xanthus did of yore,  
 The crowd had scarcely marvelled,  
 Or scarce revered them more.

But what are feasts and horses,  
 And dancing-girls and wine,  
 To the poet loved of gods and men,  
 The stranger-bard divine?  
 On him fix every ear and eye,  
 The lord of lyric lay,  
 Who comes to crown the festival  
 With glorious song to-day.  
 His stately limbs are richly clad  
 In purple and in gold;  
 His robe is flowing to his feet  
 In many a graceful fold.  
 His head with fragrant garlands twined,  
 His long locks floating free,  
 He stands amid the list'ning guests,  
 A goodly sight to see!  
 E'en such his garb and ornament  
 As once Arion wore



Whom from the wave a fish did save,  
 And home to Corinth bore.  
 But he is with no savage crew,  
 No peril hath to fear;  
 For in his patron's hall he stands,  
 And none but friends are near.

Simonides the Coan!  
 His fingers touch the string,  
 His flashing eyes are lifted up  
 As he begins to sing.  
 "I will not waste my life," he sang,  
 "A perfect man to seek \*  
 Upon this earth wide-habited,  
 Who but is sometimes weak?  
 Th' immortal gods have this alone,  
 To live from censure free.  
 Men are the sport of circumstance,  
 And blameless cannot be,  
 Enough for me the man to find  
 Whose soul abhors the vile;  
 Who, honoring the gods above,  
 Doth on their poets smile.  
 So shall he leave a good report  
 E'en when to Hades gone,  
 Nor mourn unhonored and unsung  
 By chilly Acheron." †

And *next* he sang of Scopas' might,  
 His old and glorious race,  
 And his stormy-footed coursers  
 Of unconquerable pace.  
 There is many a prince of Thessaly  
 That owns high-stepping steeds,  
 There is many a wealthy foreigner  
 That in the course succeeds;  
 But vain were all their efforts,  
 And humbled all their pride,

---

\* See Plato's Protagoras, where the prelude of Simonides's ode is given. It appears probable that Scopas did not bear the best of characters, and the poet could not have praised him for his virtues without gross hypocrisy.

† See Theocritus, Idyl xvi.



When Scopas, son of Creon,  
 In the race his fortune tried.  
 The snowy coursers to the goal  
 Devoured th' astonished way,  
 And shrank in shame the rival house,  
 The proud Aleuadæ!

For this be thanks to Castor due,  
 Who all unseen was there,  
 And touched their feet with strength divine,  
 The prize away to bear.  
 His theme inspired the singer then,  
 And in a louder strain  
 He praised the Dioscuri,  
 The Dorian brothers twain.  
 Castor, who first taught mortals  
 To guide the steed aright,  
 And his brother, Polydeuces,  
 Aye best in fistic fight.  
 How young they went a-field to hunt  
 The Calydonian boar,  
 And in the good ship Argo tried  
 The dragon-haunted shore.  
 And how they checked huge Amycus,  
 And hushed his foul abuse;  
 And how upon those warriors bold,  
 The sons of Aphareus —  
 On Lynceus and stout Idas  
 They like a tempest fell,  
 And bore away their brides so gay,  
 And took their lives as well.  
 And how in starry semblance  
 On springing masts they light,  
 And save the praying mariners  
 When seas with foam are white;  
 And how they watch the traveller,  
 Alone, or in the throng,  
 And punish the unholy host  
 That does the stranger wrong;  
 And where a loyal worshipper  
 In risk and strife they see,  
 Or racing steed, or fighting chief,  
 The yguide to victory.



Then all would give the singer  
 Applause and honor meet;  
 But the Prince looked cold and gloomy,  
 He was chafed in his conceit.  
 And will he grudge a largess rare  
 To a bard of rarest fame?  
 Whose poet-praise to after days  
 Shall waft his patron's name.  
 He breaketh out in bitter jest —  
 "Methinks it doth belong  
 To those to pay who bear away  
 The honors of the song:  
 For every word I had therein,  
 The Twins have still their three;  
 Simonides has sung the Twins, —  
 The Twins may pay his fee."

The singer answered nothing;  
 He moved not in his place;  
 There stirred no wrinkle of his robe,  
 No muscle of his face.  
 Till a slave has touched his shoulder —  
 "There are two young men that wait,  
 And ask to see the Coan bard,  
 Beyond the outer gate:  
 Two youths of goodly bearing  
 Alike in form and face;  
 In garments white, with foreheads bright,  
 Like men of godlike race.  
 Like Dorians wear they flowing hair;  
 Their speech thereto agrees;  
 And now, beyond the outer gate,  
 They seek Simonides."

Then slowly turned the singer,  
 And slowly stepped away:  
 The revellers resumed their cups;  
 But little heeded they.  
 Their only care the present good,  
 Their law their host's behest;  
 They jeered the unrewarded bard,  
 And praised the scurvy jest.  
 And now he stands without the gate,  
 But no young men are there;



Within, a crowd; without, a blank;  
 There is naught but empty air.  
 But hark! a crash! like lightning-flash  
 Sink gallery and wall,  
 Pillar, and roof, and portico,  
 In one continuous fall!  
 The palace like a baseless dream,  
 Had melted all away;  
 And crushed beneath the crumbling mass,  
 Prince, guests, and courtiers lay.  
 And thus the Doric demigods  
 Their scornéd power displayed;  
 And thus the Twins, by poet sung,  
 Their darling poet paid.

---

## THE LAY OF SIR LYTTON.

*(Very much) after Macaulay.*

---

THE b'hoys from swate ould Ireland,  
 With awful oaths they swore,  
 The Envoy of the Saxons should  
 Make fun of them no more.  
 With awful oaths they swore it,  
 And no end of row made they,  
 And sent bill-stickers up and down,  
 All around throughout the town  
 To summon their array.  
 Up and down and all about  
 The bill-stickers have sped,  
 And porter-house and shanty  
 The flaming call have read —  
 Such as can read that is to say,  
 The rest have *heard* the news —  
 And those who cannot read can run  
 With or without their shoes.  
 Shame on the false Milesian  
 Who lingers anyhow,  
 When Doheny the fugitive,  
 Gives orders for a row.



The rioters and rowdies  
 Are pouring in amain  
 From many a noisy grog-shop,  
 And many a dirty lane,  
 From many a mouldy office where,  
 The pettifogger blooms,  
 And waits his prey from day to day  
 In precincts of the Tombs.

But in the Sixth Ward chiefly  
 The news was spread about,  
 And from the Sixth Ward chiefly  
 Did the rabble crew turn out;  
 The "Bloody Sixth" where KELLY rules  
 The roast triumphantly,  
 And by his Aldermanic rights  
 Sets drunken loafers free.  
 Thence mustered many a lusty wight,  
 The Saxon's fierce defier  
 Across the water — taking care  
 To put himself no nigher —  
 Who in the prime of Tammany  
 Had often played his part,  
 And proved himself a "Dimocrat"  
 Of hand and eke of heart.  
 And on the three election days  
 Was wont the brunt to bide,  
 To mob the polls and block the ways,  
 And thrash the Whigs beside —  
 Or if he could not thrash, at least  
 His foemen to abuse —  
 And swell with pride the sturdy train  
 Of brawling bigot Hughes.

According to the programme,  
 To dignify the affair,  
 Ned Butler the confederate,  
 Was called unto the chair,  
 At his right hand stood the Doheny  
 (If we thus accent the name),  
 And at his left the people's man  
 Of *subterranean* fame.  
 Who never looked more proud, 'tis said,  
 And glad of his array,



Not even on the hallowed morn  
 Of that eventful day,  
 When Blackwell's famous island  
 Received him to her breast;  
 And oped in joy her granite gates  
 To greet the glorious guest.

Then up and spake the Doheny,  
 "My friends, we will disgrace  
 This minion of the Saxon,  
 Who talks ill of our race,  
 He says the Celts are barbarous,  
 And also given to lie;  
 Considerably uncivilized —  
 The wretched foreign spy!  
 Unruly and disorderly —  
 Of course he *must* mean us.  
 Three groans for Henry Bulwer, then!  
 I move we raise a muss!"

And then (to take a little horn) the speaker made a pause,  
 And great was the excitement, and terrific the applause;  
 And curses loud and deep were called down on Sir  
 Henry's head,  
 And Doheny began again, and this MEMORIAL read: —

*The Boys of Knockdownmany and Killmore,  
 To His Excellency President Fillmore,*

The hesitating modesty proverbial to our race,  
 Would hinder us from thrusting our nose where we've  
 no right to,

But the present is so flagrant and remarkable a case,  
 That it's what we are in honor bound to talk about, and  
 fight, too.

We've all been so insulted by Sir Henry, the Ambassador,  
 That Your Excellency 'll see it's quite impossible to pass  
 it o'er.

He says that Celts are barbarous, will forge as well as steal.  
 Are vicious and uncivilized, and not at all genteel.  
 And by *the Celts* he means ourselves, because we're  
 Saxon-haters

(Though but for sons of Saxon men we'd been hard up  
 for taters),



And many of us have thriven in this Saxon-settled land,  
 And all of us have multiplied, till we're a goodly band,  
*And throw a fourth of Gotham's votes*, be pleased to understand.

And some of us are lawyers, and have risen to rank  
 and riches —

What a bloody shame to say of us we don't wear any  
 breeches!

And since we tolerate the laws and keep them — when  
 we must,

And though you all are heretics, don't tread you in the dust,  
 Considering these services, we've not the smallest doubt  
 That you'll proceed immediately to kick this Bulwer out;  
 And if it should bring on a war, we're ready for the  
 slaughter, —

We'll talk as big, *and run as fast*, as we did across the water,  
 And so of course Your Excellency will do all that's right,  
 And we, your said memorialists, will ever swear and fight.  
*"Ever pray"* was too pacific for the order of the night,  
 So they amended as above, which pleased the meeting quite.

---

## A SPECIMEN OF THE PUFF POE- TICAL.

Spirit of the Times, July 1851.

---

I HAVE a friend one P. C. K —,  
 Who selleth the best of all Champagne.  
 Champagne wine is good I wot,  
 Whether the weather be cold or hot;  
 When Boreas blows  
 And you're almost froze  
 From the tip of your nose  
 To the tips of your toes,  
 Then how your heart glows as the beverage flows  
 That makes you see everything *couleur de rose*  
 Or in the dog-days  
 When the sun's fierce rays



Set all in a blaze  
 And your blood seems to boil  
 And your butter turns oil  
 And the freshest of chops and steaks will spoil  
 And your face grows brown.  
 And your collars drop down  
 And there is n't a soul that you know left in town,  
 Save in Wall Street, where brokers, by way of preparing  
 For the *still hotter temperature* whither they're faring  
 Keep shaving and cornering, bulling and bearing,  
 (If the Editor shrinks  
 From this stanza, and thinks  
 Such an insinuation might possibly stop all his  
 Circulation in this one commercial metropolis.  
 Why then he may just  
 Leave it out and be — blessed,  
 Or fill up with asterisks as he likes best)  
 And your poor tired muse  
 Beseechingly woos  
 The balmiest breezes of eve to come at her —  
 In short, under every stage of thermometer  
 All times and all seasons are good for Champagne  
 Especially that of P. C. K. —

Some years ago there was going on  
 A great deal of talk about *Du Brimont*  
 And after that again years a few  
 There was still more talk about *Cordon Bleu*  
 And 'tis now the fashion to talk about *Mumm*  
 (The very name says, in its praises be dumb)  
 And some about *Heidseck* will prate for a week (it  
 Might hide very long before I would seek it)  
 And your grave Bostonian so stately of pace,  
 With *second hand English* writ in his face,  
 Of whom you may say without any libel, he  
 Claims to be master of *omne scibile*  
 And in every thing to be men's guider  
 Will talk to you half an hour about *Schreider*;  
 At one time Bacchanals all confest  
 That *Brigham's Sillery* was the best,  
 It used to gladden me when I spied  
 His grape leaf gilt on a bottle's side



But *pallida mors* who lets none escape  
 Without leave stalked away with our grape  
 And a very good fellow well known to me  
 Hangs out a wine that they call N. B.  
 If any one's cross or troubled with spleen, he  
 Will find it a capital *Nota bene*  
 But I'm sure there never was any Champagne  
 Like the — brand\* of P. C. K. —

And I remember it happened to me  
 When I was a Cantab at Trinity;  
 A friend who lived in the land of the Gaul  
 Sent me some wine that was rather tall,  
 The name I was stupid enough to forget,  
 But the smack of the juice I remember yet.  
 'Twas a creamy wine of roseate hue  
 Like rubies dissolved in ambrosial dew,  
 And we brought in good fellows not a few  
 To carry a rich Symposium through.  
 Oh 'twas a goodly sight to see  
 The mirth of that revelling company!  
 The Celts that meet about the Park so notedly irascible  
 So prominent in everything that's make-a-man-jack-  
 ass-able,  
 Could not have made more noise than we and scarce have  
 been more riotous;  
 We got a going such a pace no mortal man could quiet us;  
 For one rose up and speechified and one sat down and sang  
 Another laughed the while he quaffed until the old roof rang,  
 And one was quoting Addison and one was quoting Rabelais,  
 And one declaiming Locksley Hall was by no means a  
 shabby lay  
 And one far gone, with something twixt a hiccup and a  
 cough in his  
 Throat, lay along ejaculating scraps of Aristophanes.  
 Now this was remarkably tall Champagne  
 But nothing to that of P. C. K. —

And if you would know  
 Where you must go

---

\* I've had to strike out the name because the brand is n't now  
 what it "used to was". 1857.



To find the wine  
 That is so divine  
 Whenever you feel like a fit of the blues  
 Take up your hat and put on your shoes  
 (Or boots as the case may be) on your feet  
 And go down to 80 Beaver Street,  
 For there is the office of P. C. K.,  
 And there you will find the best Champagne.

## THE UNTRUE AND MELANCHOLY HISTORY MARGUERITE GAUTIER.

• "Spirit of the Times," July 1858.

MISS GAUTIER was a very nice girl,  
 With lips like coral, and teeth like pearl,  
 Cheeks very pink, and skin very fair,  
 Big blue eyes and golden hair;  
 And her style and her figure were very complete,  
 And her hands and her feet  
 Were remarkably neat,  
 And her name was Margaret (in French *Marguerite*).  
 In short, she was something uncommonly sweet.  
 All sorts of men, from the prince to the farmer,  
 Had to admire her, she was such a charmer.

"Sweets unto sweet," the strict conclusion brings,  
 That pretty women must, like pretty things,  
 Enumeration's power it might perplex  
 To note the longings of the fairer sex;  
 The growing wants that on indulgence wait,  
 The fragile china, and the massive plate,  
 The winter's heavy shawls and sable fur,  
 The summer's robes of painted gossamer,  
 The antique laces, and the fresh brocade,  
 The well-trained footman, and accomplished maid  
 The neat *chaussure* that tempts the passing beau;  
 The diamond's sea of light, the ruby's glow;



The prancing "steppers," and the gilt *coupe*;  
 The first new peaches, and the last new play;  
 And all the pride of life and lust of eye,  
 That fashion's fickle forms of fantasy supply.

But alas! for the visions of ladies romantic!  
 Not even the fairest *perpetually* can tick.

Margaret Gautier

Had no money to pay

For all the fine things she would have every day.  
 Her face was her fortune, as says the old song,  
 And she soon found some trouble in getting along,  
 For she hadn't the rhino to come it so strong.

In such a tight place being Margaret Gautier,  
 She took to the only contrivable way,

I'd rather her line,

Though it may be quite fine,

Should ne'er be adopted by any of mine.

Open house for whoe'er came along

(Provided he'd only the tin),

She kept, and she hung out no end of *amans*,  
 (You see that the subject compels me to trench  
 Every once in a while on the tongue of the French),  
 Taking strangers' and natives, too, in.

Now you won't understand me as meaning t' advance  
 That such things as this happen only in France.

I haven't the least dubitation that it is

An every-day case in our populous cities;

Nay, in this virtuous town you might easily find,

If you so *unvirtuously* should be inclined,

Ladies as gay

As Margaret Gautier;

Only we don't so prize 'em

As to immortalize 'em

Every day, in a different way,

First in a novel, and then in a play.

But this is a trait of French civilization,

That's greatly conducive to edification,

As yet we are not so far forward; but ah!

In the good time that's coming, *nous changerons cela*.

When socialism over all orders and ranks is,

And folks love in leashes, and live in phalanxes,



And there is but one Fourier, and G—y his prophet,  
 'Twill then be the time to think seriously of it,  
 And disciples of progress consistently may  
 For their goddess of Reason take Margaret Gautier.

Mr. Armand was a nice young man  
 As ever lounged in a smoking divan.  
 He turned the heads of the women and maids,  
 And he wore tight trousers, with stunning big plaids,  
 (At least such is Fechter's idea of the part,  
 And Fechter's allowed to stand high in his art.)  
 Who knew him the best were accustomed to say,  
 He was fit to be one of the *jeunesse doree*,  
 Which literally stands for *gilt youth*; but alas!  
 Their *mettle* is generally nothing but *brass*,  
 So it is a misnomer — we can't let it pass,  
 Unless you consider the letters too few,  
 And after the G just epenthesize\* U,  
 When (with Tribunese grammar) perhaps it may do.

But this nice young man had lived much in the country,  
 And wasn't well posted in city effrontery,  
 Till he came down one day to *la belle ville de Paris*,  
 A city that plays with young men the Old Harry.  
 A friend of his there thought 'twould not be irrelevant  
 To take him around some, and show him the elephant,  
 And supposed them most likely the creature to meet  
 If they went to the house of the fair Marguerite.

Now Miss Marguerite had become so stuck up  
 She'd have none but the *somest* of punkins to sup,  
 And in making a nosegay she couldn't touch really a  
 Flower at all, except a camelia.  
 But it happened that Armand had seen her before,  
 And to see her but once was of course to 'adore.  
 So (in quarters like that there's small fear of rejection),  
 He conceived for this lady the warmest affection.

---

\* Which means when you put in a letter or more  
 In the midst of a word where it wasn't before.  
 Consult any writer on figures of prosody,  
 Anthon or Cary — and Ramsay's good, too —  
 If you should any of them come across, a day  
 When you have nothing that's better to do.



And she, by a most irresistible whim,  
 Was seized with the purest of passions for him,  
 Just at first sight that very night.  
 The wish she had formed she made speedily known,  
 To leave all the others, and love him alone;  
 And, since she was certain in town to allure all eyes,  
 Determined to go off, and quietly ruralize,  
 Thereby to get rid of her old city gaieties —  
 And certainly very agreeable in May it is  
 To wander away to some sylvan retreat  
 With a nice young man evermore at your feet.

But (now to the coolest thing yet very pat I come),  
 To go on a journey requires some *viaticum*.  
 So Margaret, to scare up the needful amount,  
 Straightway had recourse to a very rich Count,  
 Who was one of her many *amans* or *amis*.  
 "I know you are flush, my dear fellow," says she,  
 "Lend me five hundred dollars to get up a spree."

So, thinking that he  
 Of the party would be,  
 The Count ponied up instantane-ous-ly.  
 You may "phansy his phelinx"  
 Beyond all concealings,  
 When he came back at night,  
 With no doubt all was right,  
 And found that the damsel to whom he had lent a  
 Cool half a thousand, was quite *non inventa*.

This singular couple (most couples are plural),  
 Meantime posted off out of town to endure all  
 The hardships of doing a bit of the rural;  
 Such as, deprivation of city society,  
 Same faces over again to satiety;  
 Dull rainy Sundays, that give you the vapors,  
 Stops in the mail, and no chance of the papers.  
 Gossips who will pertinaciously look for you —  
 Servants who won't as they should wash or cook for you;  
 Indeed, I've no doubt when the Count's *loan* was out,  
 They had sometimes to put their own clothes up the spout,  
 And dine on umbrellas, like Jingle in Pickwick,  
 And burn tallow candles with great nasty thick wick.



Yet spite of all evils they lived on their loves  
 And were getting as cozily on as two doves,  
 When who should come down, their enjoyment to mar,  
 One unlucky day, but our Armand's papar!

He was an old gentleman, portly and big,  
 With very black clothes, and a very white wig,  
 Had the gift of the gab, and indulged in it freely,  
 And was in discourse platitudinous really,  
 When once he got off, and could spin you genteelly  
 As many round lies in a sentence as — any

Frenchman you know,  
 And there are many  
 Who can do so.

He had but this son, whom he doated upon,  
 And thought the young man getting seriously done,  
 So determined to put a swift end to his fun,  
 And, just when his hopeful least dreamed of a visit, he  
 Appeared on the scene to disturb his felicity.

When once this old foggy saw how the land lay,  
 He started his plan in a very odd way.  
 Suspecting his son would be hard to persuade, he  
 Proceeded instead to come over the lady;  
 At first tried to bully, but met with his match,  
 So altered his scheme with convenient dispatch,  
 And taking a line, which appears of the oddest, he  
 Commended her much for her virtue and modesty;  
 "But," says he, "my dear child, we're all under dominion  
 Of a very great nuisance called public opinion,  
 And, though of your goodness I've not the least doubt,  
 Such ain't the opinion of most folks about.  
 Not only you'll send this young man to the d—l,  
 But also you'll work his poor sister much evil.  
 So long as he keeps in your fair companie  
 She cannot be spliced to a proper *parti*."  
 (This was all a romance, and the old fellow knew it,  
 But he'd filled up his programme, and had to go through it.  
 If causes like this could break off a French wedding,  
 There'd be small amount of legitimate bedding,  
 And Hymen's most *à la mode* priest might decline a cure  
 That afforded no fees, as a profitless sinecure.)



"So do, like an angel, clear out — cut away!  
And a father will bless you for ever and aye,  
Not to speak of the prayers of a sister and mother,  
For her who saved them, and a son and a brother."

"But what if I do," said the innocent Peg,  
"He would run after me if he had but one leg.  
Should I fly to the deserts of Ind on a camel, he  
Would follow, nor care half a curse for his family."  
"Exactly; and therefore you'll have to pretend  
That the flame is burnt out and your love at an end;  
And since he has no tin (on which comforts depend)  
You're forced to take refuge with some other friend."  
And poor Marguerite was so green that she did  
Just what the old file of a governor bid.

The above is the version of Monsieur Dumas,  
(Alexander, of course, but the son, not the pa.)  
There are other historical writers who say  
That the tale should be told in a different way;  
That Marguerite *really* went off like a flash  
Because her dear Armand was quite out of cash.  
The thing has occurred very often before,  
And probably *will* occur more than once more.

A lot of gay people one evening had met  
In the rooms of a very extensive lorette,  
Who gave a magnificent ball of a Saturday,  
(It slides into Sunday, that's why she made that her day,)\*  
There were heaps of young dandies, and bushels of actresses  
In pink, blue, and green — every color but black dresses.  
And hard looking middle-aged men cutting dashes,  
With no end of orders, and beards, and mustaches:

And Armand was there;  
Out of very despair,

He went into society *pour se distraire*;  
And whom should he meet but a girl with light hair!  
It made him indignant to find in his way  
His quondam companion, Miss Marguerite Gautier.

---

\* The French like to have their spree<sup>s</sup> out on the latter day.



For Armand had been drinking: just to drown unpleasant thinking

He took down champagne like winking till he nearly turned his head.

Though not absolutely reeling, still a long way past concealing

Any strong or sudden feeling; and impetuously he said:  
"Friends! just look at that 'ere woman! I have done for her what no man

Would have done but me; uncommon strong the love for her I bore.

By following and loving her I worried my old Governor,  
Lost my station in the nation, opportunities a score.

Fame and fortune both despising, her affection only prizing,  
I had starved with her, or shared with her a cottage or a crust;

But she left me! Why? Ah, *I* know. 'Cause I had run short of rhino;

She abandoned me for lucre, for the vile and filthy dust!"

Here failed his speech; with rage he shook;

He hitched his pants and out he took

A most plethoric pocket book,

(While Margaret wished herself in Hades,)

Whence tumbled out bank notes in scores,

That turned the eyes of all the ladies,

And over Margaret these he pours:

"There, take the dross! since that is all you prize,  
Both it and you I utterly despise."

Here Margaret's friend, who had witnessed the action,

Came up in a rage to demand satisfaction,

Addressing our hero with "Sir, I must say

You're a coward to talk to a woman that way;

Consider yourself as insulted; take that!"

He pulled off his glove and he fetched him a pat.

Of course after that there was nothing to do

But to order up pistols and coffee for two.

A belligerent party at breaking of day

Went off to the wood in an ancient "po' chay,"

(The wood that is known as the *Bois de Boulogne*)

But it luckily happened that no one was hurt,

For a curious bystander gave the alarm,



And brought down on the combatants sundry *gens d'armes*,  
 Making seconds and principals promptly cut dirt.  
 The fair Marguerite, as it must be confessed,  
 Had caused a sad vacuum in many a man's chest.

So a sort of retributive justice was shown  
 When there turned out to be something wrong in her own,  
 Her drinking, and gaming, and flirting, *et cetera*,  
 Were not quite the remedies likely to better her;  
 But she "went it while young" at the best pace, until  
 She took to her bed, and lay hopelessly ill.  
 There, plundered by servants, unhelpt by a friend,  
 She lingered along to her desolate end.  
 At last, when grown weakest, and palest, and thinnest, her  
 Scruples induced her to send for a minister —

Or priest, I should say,  
 Who came the next day,  
 And "carried her sins and her fears all away."

And this is why the *party prater*  
 (As Colonel Pipes perchance might say)  
 Never saw fit to reprobate a

Perusal of this play.

Although they anathematized Uncle Tom,  
 And hindered Dumas (that's the elder one) from  
 Going on with his tale of the *Wandering Jew*,  
 (Surnamed *Isaac Laquedem*, in which he'd a crack at 'em,) —  
 That was bound to eclipse the famed story of Sue.

I've not yet been able to find that a priest  
 Has ever "pitched into" this drama the least,  
 Though the heroine's *life* a strict moralist shocks, he  
 Would hold that her *death* shows complete orthodoxy.  
 But if into this subject a writer inquires,  
 He'll be greeted with columns of "scoundrels" and "liars."  
 The sole line of *argument* some people know —  
 My dear Bishop Feegrave now isn't it so?

To make her happiness complet  
 She saw her Armand at her feet,  
 The old papa confessed the cheat,  
 And, *since she had not the least chance of recovery*,  
 And his son was so ardent and constant a lover, he  
 Without any condition,  
 Took off his prohibition.



So she glided out of life,  
Quite a saint, almost a wife.

MORAL OR ENVOY.

*La Dame aux Camelias* was so the rage,  
And had such a run on the Vaudeville stage;  
Nor only in Paris, but all over France;  
(They played it all round everywhere *en province*,)  
And in Italy, Belgium, and Germany, too,  
Some dramatists thought it in England might do,  
They got up a version extremely genteel —  
If I rightly remember they called it *Camille*.  
Then, since law in England requires, with a high sense  
Of morality's claims, for each new piece a license,  
They called on the Chamberlain; this reply made he —  
"A very good play, of our own worth a score,  
Like most of the dramas from Paris brought o'er;  
But on this side the channel (the fact I deplore)  
There's no lady-go-to-able name for a — lady,  
In Miss Marguerite's peculiar position, and so  
You'll agree with me surely — in short, it's no go."  
Thus the conquering lady was run off the track;  
That prude, Anglo Saxondom, drove her straight back.  
But the worst was to come, for soon after she found  
A strong opposition upon her own ground.  
A vaudevillist, looking for something quite new,  
Bethought him the "moral indignant" might do.

I'm not sure of his name,

Though 'tis one known to fame,

French names from one's mem'ry are so apt to steal.

Was it *Clairville*, or *Bieville*, or some other *vill*e?

(It wasn't *Bayard*

For he isn't *thar*,

But has gone to — wherever dead Vaudevillists are. \*)

---

\* His mode of departure was so very French  
That it seems to be fairly deserving of menti-  
-on, at least in a note; he was first taken ill  
With his foot in a waltz, and his hand on his quill.  
He gave a big ball on a Saturday night,  
The very next morning his spirit took flight,  
And his posthumous play

In the course of a day,  
Was brought out with no less than the greatest success,  
At the *Vaudeville* or the *Varietes*.



Ah, now I remember! the man is *Barriere*,  
 And his townsmen should pray he may ever be there,  
 A permanent *barrier* against the attractions  
 Of innocent names for *uninnocent* actions.  
 For he in his "Daughters of Marble" has told.  
 How these creatures are worse than the sirens of old.  
 He shows a young man from the fairest position  
 Brought down to a very unseemly condition,  
 By a woman to evil so hopelessly wed  
 There isn't a word on her side to be said.  
 Till at last, stripped of all, and with scarcely a rag on his  
 Back, he expires in the greatest of agonies.

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## AN ANATHEMA A LA WALTER DE MAPES.

On the man who stole my purse in an Omnibus. Knickerbocker 1856.

---

MAY the man who stole my purse meet with all  
 inflictions!  
 Friendship of the Sewer set, Feegrave's benedictions,  
 Long harangues Congressional, full of wrath and passion  
 Strikingly illustrated in the present fashion.

May his wife write several books and be counted clever,  
 May his sons be candidates (well abused) for ever!  
 May he be in prison shut, fasting without ere a can,  
 And have nothing there to read except the *North-American*!

May he perish unabsolved of all sins confessible;  
 May he have to write a leader for the *Inexpressible*  
 May he be dissected by Bowie-Knives and handsaws,  
 And sent off an Emigrant overland to Kansas!

When its earthly tenement yields his soul no shelter  
 May it animate the corpse of an ancient pelter,  
 Tackled to an omnibus, may 'neath whip and curb he  
 Travel to eternity o'er the *Russ in Urbe*.



May he be devoured alive by the fiercest creatures  
*Cimices domestici*, Carribee mosquitoes!  
 May the railroads subdivide into sausage meal him  
 And adopted citizens o'er their whis key eat him!

---

## SONG OF THE BUCHANIER'S.

Fraser, December 1856.

---

THE day is past, the votes are cast,  
 The great result is known;  
 No more of fear, but joy and cheer:  
 The land is now our own.  
 Whatever powers to combat ours  
 And check our course were wont,  
 Both great and small, we put down all,  
 And first of all FREMONT.  
 We hate his fame, we scorn his name,  
 (As all that sounds like free;)  
 We therefore have put Fremont down,  
 And hey, then! up go we!

We'll put the Northern presses down,  
 Their awkward voice we'll stifle;  
 We're not the men for tongue and pen,  
 We go for knife and rifle;  
 For bludgeon and rope shall be full scope,  
 From Kansas to the sea;  
 We'll therefore put the Free Press down,  
 And hey, then! up go we!

We'll put free speech in Congress down,  
 In Bully Brooks' way;  
 The law of the cane shall make quite plain  
 What members must not say.  
 No man shall dare our plots declare,  
 Or show how black they be;  
 We'll put free speech entirely down,  
 And hey, then! up go we!



And next we'll put religion down,  
 (Except what does for slaves,  
 That they should obey for ever and aye,  
 Which sometimes bloodhounds saves,)  
 For the parsons preach free-toil and free-speech,—  
 A vile iniquity!  
 We'll therefore put religion down,  
 And hey, then! up go we!

We'll afterwards put marriage down,  
 For the neighbouring Mormon powers  
 Have their own 'peculiar institution,'  
 And sympathize with ours;  
 The patriarchs old who had slaves, we're told,  
 Had also polygamy.  
 Can one be well and the other of hell?  
 So hey, then! up go we!

We'll also put all learning down,  
 For scholars are our foes,  
 The men of thought set those at nought  
 Who can only reason by blows:  
 And learning gives us ill report,  
 It likes not slavery;  
 We'll therefore put all learning down,  
 And hey, then! up go we!

We'll put all decent envoys down,  
 And pack them straight away.  
 MIKE WALSH has claims to go to St. James,  
 To the Tuileries, *Soulé*;  
 And ATCHISON shall to Russia go,  
 (For the Czar fit company;)  
 Thus will we put good manners down,  
 And hey, then! up go we!

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## VERSE TRANSLATIONS.

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### THE LAMENT FOR DAPHNIS.

FROM THE FIRST IDYLL OF THEOCRITUS.

Literary World, August 1847.

---

BEGIN the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, again!  
Thyrsis am I from Ætna, and this is Thyrsis' strain.  
Where were ye, nymphs, where *were* ye when Daphnis  
pined away?

In Peneus' lovely vallies, or in Pindus' vales that day?  
For sure by great Anapus' wave ye were not then, I deem,  
Nor Ætna's lofty summit, nor Acis' holy stream.

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
For him the jackals loudly howled; him did the wolves deplore;  
His death the very lion from the glade lamented o'er.

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
And many cows were round his feet, and many bulls  
were near,

And many calves and heifers too, bewailed their master dear.

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
First Hermes from the mountain came, and said „O Daph-  
nis mine!

With whom art thou so much in love? For whom, my  
friend, dost pine?”

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
And cowherds came, and shepherds came, and goatherds  
crowded fast;

They all inquired what ill was thine; Priapus came the last,  
And said “Poor Daphnis, why art thou thus wasting?  
while the maid,

O'er many a rugged mountain top, o'er many a grassy slade,  
Has fled to seek another man,\* and left thee desolate.

---

\* Our translation here is founded on an emendation of C. Wordsworth, *ἀ δέ ἐ κώρα* for the old reading *ἀ δέ τε κώρα* confirmed by the parallel passage in Virgil.

“Galle quid insanis? ait, tua cura Lycoris

Perque nives *alium* perque horrida castra secuta est.”



Ah, truly thou art sick of love, and very hard thy fate!"  
But nothing said the swain to them; his bitter love for aye  
He brooded o'er and cherished it, unto his dying day.

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
And Venus sweetly laughing came to triumph o'er her foe.  
(A pleasant smile was on her lips; a heavy heart below).  
"And did'st thou, Daphnis, boast o'er love to gain the  
victory?

And hath not love, a grievous love, been victor over thee?"

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
"O Venus, hard and cruel one!" made answer Daphnis then,  
"O Venus very blamable! O Venus curst of men!  
And dost thou think already, that my sun for aye hath set?  
Daphnis shall e'en in Hades feel the pangs of Eros yet."

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
"Steal off to Ida, where they say the cowherd once to thee —  
Go to Anchises! there are oaks; here only reeds to see;  
And pleasant is the swarming hum of many a honey bee."

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
"Adonis too is in his prime, for well he tends his ewes,  
And shoots the trembling antelopes, and savage beasts  
pursues."

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
"Yet once again approaching him, say thus to Diomed,  
"The cowherd Daphnis yields to me; come thou and fight  
instead!"

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
"Wolves, jackals, cavern-loving bears, ye mountain-  
dwelling brood,  
Farewell! Herd Daphnis never more shall meet you in  
the wood,

Nor in the thicket nor the groves. O Arethuse, farewell!  
And rivers all, whose lovely streams from Thymbris  
downward swell!"

Begin the lay Bucolical, dear muses mine, begin!  
"And whether thou, O Pan, upon Lyceus' range should'st be,  
Or traversing great Mænalus, come thou to Sicily!  
And leave the tomb of Helice, the fun'ral pillar high,  
Of Lycaonides, though loved by dwellers in the sky."  
Leave off the lay Bucolical, go muses, leave the lay!  
"Come royal Pan, and take from me this pipe so sweet to play.  
(Its stops are of the closest wax, its mouth is wreathed well)  
For this unlucky love of mine is dragging me to hell."



Leave off the lay Bucolical, go muses, leave the lay!  
 "Let brambles, yes, let sharpest thorns bear violets to-day,  
 Let bushes of the juniper sprout with narcissus fine.  
 Let everything be interchanged, and pears grow on the pine;  
 Since Daphnis dieth. Now indeed let stags the staghounds  
 tear,

And mountain owls for singing with nightingales compare."

Leave off the lay Bucolical, go muses, leave the lay.  
 So much he said, and nothing more. His song for aye  
 was done.

Him Venus would have lifted up, but all his thread was spun;  
 And Daphnis to the river went. Away the eddy bore,  
 The man whom every muse did love, nor any nymph abhor.

## THE INCANTATION OF SIMÆTHA.

FROM THE SECOND IDYLL OF THEOCRITUS.

Literary World, July 1858.

HO, SLAVE! the laurel branches here. Where *can*  
 the philtres be?

Black wool around the magic vase! Arrange it speedily;  
 That I the love who loves me not may conquer by my  
 charms,

Since now for twelve whole days the wretch comes never  
 to my arms.

He knows not if we live or die; he ne'er at break of day  
 Knocks at our door; his fickle love has gone another way.

Ah, to his dear gymnasium to-morrow will I go,  
 To see him, and to scold him, too, because he treats me so.  
 But now my charms shall conquer him. Oh, lend thy  
 brightest ray,

Propitious moon! for unto thee in secret will I pray,  
 And to the infernal Hecaté, whom jackals shrink before,  
 As o'er the funeral mounds she stalks, amid the clotted gore.  
 Hail, Hecaté! thou fearful one, and speed us now if e'er,  
 That our's with dire Medea's drugs, or Circe's may compare,  
 And prove effective as the charms of Perimedé fair.

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
 lover home.



And first we burn the barley cakes — Haste, strew them,  
Thestylis.

Where are your wits, you wretched girl, at such a time as this?  
Am I become *your* laughing-stock? Now strew, and  
strewing say,  
“Thus do I sprinkle Delphis’s bones, thus let them waste  
away.”

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
lover home.

For Delphis hath tormented me; so I at Delphis now  
Enkindle this; and as it snaps, the blazing laurel bough,  
And not a cinder leaves to see, so sharp and swift the flame,  
So let the fire of fierce desire consume all Delphis’s frame.

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
lover home.

Now as I melt, with aid divine, this cake of wax away,  
E’en thus be Delphis, Myndis’s son, consumed with love  
to-day;

And even as this brazen wheel whirls round in rapid track,  
So let him to my door be whirled by Aphrodite back.

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
lover home.

Now will I offer barley husks — Thou, Artemis, can’st well  
Move all things stubborn — even him, the Inflexible, of hell —  
The dogs are baying through the town, with sacred  
terror awed.

Ho, strike the cymbal, Thestylis! The goddess is abroad!

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
lover home.

Behold! the sea is silent all; the blasts are gone to rest,  
But never sleeps the pain of care within my troubled breast.  
For I am all on fire for him, who left me (woe’s my life!)  
To be a vile deserted thing, and not a wedded wife.

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
lover home.

Thrice pour I my libation out, and thrice these words  
I say, —

“Or be she maid, or be she wife, whom Delphis loves, I pray  
He may forget her utterly, like Theseus, who of old,  
On Dia Ariadne left for all her locks of gold.”

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
lover home.



There grows a herb in Arcady that maddens every steed;  
The mares and colts go wild from it that on the mountains  
feed.

Thus raging my I Delphis see; like madman let him come,  
And from his loved gymnasium rush hither to my home.

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
lover home.

I take this bit of woollen fringe — from Delphis's cloak  
it came —

And thread by thread the fringe I shred above the hungry  
flame.

Ah me! ah me! consuming love, why suck my life-blood so?  
Why cling to me like hungry leech that will not let me go?

Then turn and turn, my magic wheel, and bring my  
lover home!

To-morrow I'll a lizard pound, a bitter cup to pour;  
Now, take these unguents, Thestylis, and go anoint his door,  
Above the threshold where I still am bound in soul and heart,  
Though nothing he regardeth me, or eareth for my smart;  
And spitting, whisper "E'en thus anoint I Delphis's bone."

Then turn my wheel, and bring my love, for now I sit alone.  
Ah, how shall I my passion wail? With what begin my lay?  
Who brought this evil on me? Anaxo came one day  
(The daughter of Eubulus), who the sacred basket bore  
Unto the grove of Artemis; around her and before  
Were many savage animals, a lioness was one.

O, lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear how it begun!  
Thucarila, my Thracian nurse (now dead and gone is she),  
Was living near, and much besought and much entreated me  
To see with her the spectacle, so I, foredoomed to woe,  
Put on my fairest linen robe along with her to go,  
And clasped me in the yellow gown that Clearista lent.

O, lady Moon, regard my love! hear whence the dart  
was sent.

When we were half-way thither, by Lycon's house I spy  
Delphis and Endamippus together passing by.

Their locks were blond as amber, their limbs were shin-  
ing bright,

So shining, that thy beams, fair Moon, cast not a lovelier light.  
For they were fresh from exercise, from pleasant toil  
they came,

O, lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear me whence  
the flame.



And as I saw him I grew mad, my soul was wounded sore,  
 Unhappy me! my beauty paled; I saw and heard no more,  
 Nor thought of the procession, nor knew I how I came  
 Back home again; a fiery pang took hold of all my frame.  
 Ten days, ten nights in bed I lay, but found there no repose.

O, lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear how it arose!  
 And all my skin grew tawny as sandal wood to see,  
 And all my hair fell off my head, and nought was left of me  
 But skin and bones; while still I searched the city through  
 and through,

Nor missed the house of any hag, if only charms she knew.  
 But no one had a remedy, and still the time went on.

O, lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear how it began!  
 And so to this my servant-maid at last the truth I say,  
 "O, Thestylis, for this disease find me some saving way.  
 For Myndis's son has all my soul; now, therefore, hasten  
 straight,

For him at the gymnasium of Timagetes wait  
 Since there it is he loves to be, ay, thither 'tis he goes.

(O, lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear how it arose!)  
 And when you find him there alone, nod quietly, and say,  
 'Simætha wishes you to come,' and bring him out this way,"  
 Thus said I; off she ran, and brought the smooth-limbed  
 Delphis here,

Into these very rooms of mine; and when I knew him near,  
 Just as he crossed the threshold with lightly falling tread,

(O Lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear me how it sped!)  
 I shuddered all from head to foot, and colder grew than snow,  
 And streams profuse, like southern dew, did from my  
 forehead flow,

And nothing could I utter — not so much as in their sleep,  
 Young children say, while closer they to their dear  
 mother creep;

But all of me was statue-stiff, such shivers through me ran.

O, Lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear how it began!  
 And when he saw me, heartless one, he looked upon the  
 ground,

And sat down on a little couch, and, sitting, speech he found:  
 "In asking me to this your house, before I hither came,  
 You did as much anticipate, dear mistress mine, my flame,  
 As I did when I ran to meet sweet Phyllis t'other morn.

(O Lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear how it  
 was born!)



For I was coming, yes, I was, I swear by love's delight,  
 With three or four good friends of mine, about the fall of night;  
 Sweet apples in my robe for you, my head with poplar  
 crowned

(The poplar white of Hercules), with purple fillets round.  
 (O Lady Moon, regard my love! hear how it did abound!)

And if you chose to let me in — why, very well — in truth  
 They say I am, as men go now, a tall and handsome youth;  
 I should have been contented with one kiss of your sweet  
 mouth.

But if you had repelled me then, and bolted fast your gate,  
 We should have come with torch and axe we're not the  
 men to wait.

(O Lady Moon, regard my love! Oh, hear me whence  
 it came).

So Cyprian Aphrodite is the first my thanks to claim,  
 And after Aphrodite, *you* have saved me from my fate,  
 Dear lady, by inviting me to come within your gate,  
 When I was half consumed by love, for truly love's desire  
 Becometh oft a burning ray more fierce than Vulcan's fire."  
 So said he; I, too credulous, believed the tale he told,  
 And took him by the hand at once, and in my arms did fold.  
 Our couch was soft, our lips were warm, our whisperings  
 were sweet;

I will not babble, Lady Moon, nor all we said repeat.  
 And from that time to yesterday he saw by me no blame,  
 Nor I by him, until to-day an ancient gossip came  
 (The mother of our piping-girl, Philista is her name);  
 This very day, when up the heavens the steeds immortal  
 sped,

That bring the rosy-fingered morn back from her ocean bed.  
 She told me many other things, and "Delphis loves," she said.  
 She did not tell me if his love were wedded wife or maid,  
 That I might know it certainly; but only did pretend  
 He poured his cup of pleasure full, and hurried to his end;  
 And that *her* house with crowns of his was thickly garlanded.  
 Such was the old wife's narrative. It was the truth she said.  
 For now it is the twelfth day that I wait and see him not;  
 He has some other dear delight, and we are all forgot.  
 But now I'll try to win him back with philtres — should  
 he still

Torment me thus, I'll drive him to his destiny, I will;



So mighty are the drugs I have safe guarded in my chest.  
Of old I learned them, mistress mine, from an Assyrian guest.

Then turn thy chariot ocean-ward, then Lady Moon, adieu!  
And I will bear my heavy grief, and live my sorrows through.  
Farewell, fair Moon! and fare ye well, ye other stars of light,  
That follow at the chariot wheel of softly-gliding night!

## AN AMCÆBÆAN FROM THEOCRITUS.

Literary World, February 1849.

### MENALCAS.

VALLEY and rivulet!  
Earth's fairest daughters!  
If e'er Menalcas yet  
Sang to your waters  
Songs that ye love indeed,  
While his pipe trilleth  
Do ye his lambkins feed  
As his soul willeth;  
And should our Daphnis dear  
Bring his kids ever,  
May he find plenty here,  
Failing him never.

### DAPHNIS.

Grasses and living wells!  
Sweetest things growing,\*  
Deem ye like Philomel's,  
Daphnis' strains flowing?  
Feed then his little flock,  
And, should his friend come,  
May he of richest stock  
Ne'er to the end come.

\* A singular expression, but exactly that of the original: —

*κρᾶναι καὶ βοτάναι γλυκερὸν φυτόν.*



## MENALCAS.

Green pastures everywhere,  
 Milk-pails o'erwelling;  
 Young things up-growing are  
 Where my love's dwelling.  
 But on the mournful day  
 When she ne'er passes,  
 Dry is the shepherd's lay,  
 Drier the grasses.

## DAPHNIS.

There wanders many a sheep  
 (Fertile goats by her),  
 Bees swarm in thickest heap,  
 Oaks spring up higher,  
 Where my girl's wont to play.  
 Off should she speed her,  
 Dry are the cows that day,  
 Drier their feeder.

## MENALCAS.

Goat, o'er whose she-ones bend  
 Woods deep and quiet,  
 Kids, to the wave descend,  
 For *she* is by it.  
 Tell Milo, short-horn mine,  
 Straight to him speeding,  
 How Proteus, though divine,  
 Seals was once feeding.

## DAPHNIS.

Let me the land not hold  
 Of Pelops cunning,  
 Nor have great store of gold,  
 Nor beat winds running;  
 But, singing 'neath this rock,  
 Be, love, thy pillow,  
 And view our grazing flock  
 Down to the billow.

## MENALCAS.

Cold is to trees a bane,  
 Heat drieth water;  
 Birds are with springes ta'en,  
 Beasts in toils caught are,



Maid's love makes man to moan,  
 Yea, Father Jove too,  
 I have not loved alone;  
 Thou hast felt love too.

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## THE VENGEANCE OF EROS.

IMITATED FROM THEOCRITUS.

American Review, November 1848.

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A WOOER very passionate once loved a cruel May —  
 Her form was fair beyond compare, but bitter was her way;  
 She hated him that loved her, and was unkind for aye,  
 Nor knew she Love, how great the god, how perilous his bow,  
 How bitter are the shafts he sends on her that is his foe.  
 Whene'er they met, whene'er they spoke, immovable was she,  
 And gave him not a gleam of hope to soothe his misery.  
 No smile her proud lip had for him, no pleasant glance  
 her eye;

Her tongue would find no word for him, her hand his hand  
 deny.

But as a forest-dwelling beast far from the hunter flies,  
 So did she ever treat the wretch: dire scorn was in her eyes;  
 Her lips were firmly set at him, her face transformed with ire,  
 And anger paled her haughty brow that used to glow like fire.  
 Yet even so to look on she was fairer than before,  
 And by her very haughtiness inflamed her lover more;  
 Until so great a blaze of love he could no longer bear,  
 But went before her cruel door and wept his sorrows there,  
 And kissed the stubborn threshold, and cried in his despair —  
 "O savage girl and hateful! of no human birth art thou!  
 Stone-hearted girl, unworthy love! I come before thee now  
 To offer thee my latest gift — my death — for ne'er again  
 Would I incense thee, maiden, more, nor give thee any pain.  
 But whither thou hast sentenced me, I go, for there, they say,  
 For lovers is forgetfulness, a cure, a common way;  
 Yet not e'en that, the cure of all, my longing can abate.  
 I bid these doors of thine farewell, but well I know thy fate.  
 The rose like thee is beautiful — in time, it fades away;  
 And beautiful Spring's violet which withers in a day:



The lily is exceeding fair; it falls and wastes anon:  
 The snow is white; it hardens first, and then is quickly gone;  
 And lovely is the bloom of youth, but short-lived is its prime.  
 And thou shalt love as I have loved — 'twill surely come  
 — that time,

When thou shalt look within thyself and weep in bitter woe.  
 But grant me, love, this last request — one kindness now  
 bestow:

When thou hast found me hanging dead before thy portal here,  
 O pass not by my wretched corse, but stand and drop a tear,  
 And loose the cord, and wrap me up in garments of thine own,  
 And give one kiss, the first and last that e'er I shall have  
 known.

And do not fear to kiss the dead — the dead lips will not  
 move;

I cannot change to life again, though thou shouldst change  
 to love.

And hollow out a tomb for me, my hopeless love to hide;  
 Nor go away till thou three times 'Farewell, my friend,'  
 hast cried.

And if thou wilt, say also this, 'My friend was good and  
 brave;'

And what I write upon thy wall write thou upon my grave!  
*'Love slew the man that lieth here; wayfarer pass not by,*  
 But stop and say, A cruel May hath caused him here to lie.'"

\* \* \* \* \*

The heartless fair came forth at morn, and there her lover  
 hung.

She nothing said, nor wept a tear that he had died so young.  
 Her careless garments brushed the corse that hung before  
 her bath;

The wonted fountain tempted her, she sought the pleasant  
 bath,

And braved the god whom she had spurned; for at that very  
 place,

A marble Cupid crowned the wave high o'er a marble base.  
 The conscious statue toppled prone; the stream with blood  
 was dyed;

The cruel girl's departing voice came floating on the tide.  
 Rejoice and triumph, ye that love! The god his wronger slew.  
 And love, all ye that are beloved! the god will have his due.



## BACCHUS AND ARIADNE.

FROM THE FIRST BOOK OF OVID'S *ARS AMATORIA*.

Knickerbocker, June 1847.

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*'GNOSIS in ignotis amens errabat arenis  
Qua brevis sequoreis Dia feritur aquis, etc.*

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ON Dia's sandy islet the ocean billows beat;  
On Dia's sandy islet stray ARIADNE'S feet,  
Just as from sleep she started, those erring feet are bare,  
All loose her flowing garments, all loose her yellow hair.

She plained to the deaf waters of THESEUS' cruelty;  
Her tender cheeks were tear-bedewed, most pitiful to see.  
She shrieked and wept together, but both became her well,  
Nor was her face disfigured by all the tears that fell.

Her soft, soft breasts still beating with open hands, she cried,  
'The traitor hath departed! — ah, what will me betide?  
Ah what will me betide?' she said. Hark! over all the shore,  
Sound cymbals shrill and tambourines that phrensied hands  
run o'er.

With terror fell she prostrate and stammered like the dying:  
Her color fled, and as the dead her pallid limbs were lying,  
When lo! the wild Bacchantes come, with tresses all abroad,  
And lo! the buoyant satyrs come, that swarm before their god!

And lo! the drunk SILENUS his seat can scarce retain;  
The ass is bending with his weight, his hands grasp tight  
the mane;  
He chases the Bacchantes: they fly and tempt pursuit,  
The while that clumsy rider goads on his sluggish brute.

Down from the long-eared creature he tumbles on his head!  
'Get up! get up, old fellow!' the noisy Satyrs said.

His chariot top IACCHUS with vines hath wreathed about;  
His golden reins IACCHUS to his tiger-team lets out.



Nor blush, nor speak nor even think of THESEUS now  
 she may,  
 And thrice to fly she started, and thrice fear made her stay:  
 She shuddered like the barren ears, what time the tempest  
 blows,  
 She trembled like the light reed that in the dank marsh grows.

'Behold a love more constant in me!' IACCHUS cried,  
 'Fear not; thou, Cretan woman, shalt be IACCHUS' bride:  
 The heaven shall be thy dowry! a star for all to see,  
 Thou oft shalt guide from heaven, my bride, the ship tost  
 doubtfully.'

He said and from his car, lest the tigers her should fright,  
 Leaped down to land; the yielding sand confest his foot-  
 step's might.  
 He pressed her to his bosom — to strive she had no skill;  
 He bore her off — for easily a god does what he will.  
 Then some went singing Hymen! and some cried Evoe!  
 And so the God and his true-love were wedded holily.

### THREE EPIGRAMS FROM GEORGE BUCHANAN.

New Haven 1839.

VENDIDIT ære polum, terras in morte reliquit;  
 Styx superest Papæ quam colat una Pio.

The heavens for gold Pope Pius sold,  
 The earth at death he left;  
 So he must dwell for aye in hell,  
 Of all but that bereft.

Paulus ab Hebraeo scis quantum distet Iuda?  
 Hic cœli Dominum vendidit, ille domum.

Wouldst know from Hebrew Judas how differs Paul of Rome?  
 One sold the Lord of heaven, the other sells his home.

Contendunt specimen pistor pictorque uter edat  
 Pulchrius, hic fuco doctior, ille foco.



Hic fecisse Deum se jactat; rettulit ille,  
 Corpus ego verum, tu simulacra facis.  
 Dentibus assidue teritur Deus hic tuus, inquit;  
 Corrodunt vermes, rettulit ille tuum.  
 Pictor ait, multos meus integer astat in annos;  
 Sæpe una innumeros devorat hora tuos,  
 At tibi vix toto Deus unus pingitur anno,  
 Pistor ait, decies mille dat hora mihi,  
 Parcite, ait mystes frustra contendere verbis;  
 Nil sine me poterit vester uterque Deus.  
 Et quia utrumque Deum facio, mihi servit uterque:  
 Namque hic mendicat, manditur ille mihi.

A baker and a painter once into a quarrel fell,  
 Whether the skilful artist did the man of dough excel:  
 The painter boasted he made God; but quick was the reply,  
 "You fashion but his image, his real body I."  
 "Your God is ever chewed by men," "And yours the worms  
 devour,"  
 "My God remains for years entire, a witness of my power;  
 Of yours some tens of thousands are eaten in an hour."  
 "But you can scarcely paint a god in one revolving year;  
 Of mine a hundred thousand in one short hour appear."  
 "Stay," said the priest, "my children, nor quarrel fruitlessly;  
 Your gods of bread and canvass are nothing without me;  
 And since I make a god of both, they both promote my good,  
 The painter's god must beg for me, the baker's be my food."

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## THE AUTHORS' QUARREL.

Translated for the Literary World from Mollère's.

*Femmes Savantes, February 1853.*

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TRISSOTIN (*introducing Vadius*).

OUR friend has been dying to see you so long,  
 That, in bringing him hither, I cannot be wrong.  
 No tyro, dear madam — an adept in wit.

PHILAMINTA.

The hand that presents him is surety for it.



TRISSOTIN.

All the authors of old he has read thoroughly;  
Not a man in the country knows more Greek than he

PHILAMINTA.

Good Heavens! He knows Greek, then! *Greek*, sister; dear me!

BELISA.

Greek, niece; did you ever!

ARMANDA.

What, Greek! Can it be?

PHILAMINTA.

Mr. Vadius knows Greek! Ah! allow me the bliss,  
For love of that Greek, sir, to give you a kiss.  
(*She kisses him; he kisses Belisa! and Armanda also.*)

HENRIETTE (*to Vadius, who is proceeding to kiss her, too*).

Excuse me, sir; Greek I do not understand.

PHILAMINTA.

I love those Greek books; they are really so grand!

VADIUS.

Dear Madam, I fear to be tedious or rude:  
I may on some learned discussion intrude;  
But I was *so* anxious to see you to-day —

PHILAMINTA.

Sir, a man who knows Greek *cannot* be in the way.

TRISSOTIN.

Besides, he does marvels in prose and in verse;  
And can, if he will, something pretty rehearse.

VADIUS.

The fault of our authors (without reservation)  
Is, that they monopolize all conversation!  
In street or at table, at court or in city,  
Unweariedly reading some wearisome ditty.  
Now, *I* think the silliest thing in creation  
Is an author who everywhere *begs* admiration,  
Who seizes the ears of the first he can find,  
And punishes *them* for *his* absence of mind.  
You never saw *me* such an obstinate bore;  
I agree with the Greek who, they tell us, of yore  
Forbid all his scholars, in special instructions,  
To be in a hurry to read their productions —  
Here's a little new poem for young lovers; permit  
Me to ask for your candid opinion of it.



TRISSOTIN.

Your verses have beauties in none others found.

VADIUS.

The Loves and the Graces in all *yours* abound.

TRISSOTIN.

Your phrases are neat, and your style is *so* light!

VADIUS.

We find the pathetic in all that *you* write.

TRISSOTIN.

How sweet your *Bucolics*! how tender and true!  
Theocritus, surely, was nothing to you.

VADIUS.

Your odes have a noble and elegant vein,  
That even old Horace could never attain.

TRISSOTIN.

Can anything equal your love-ditties rare?

VADIUS.

Can aught with your wonderful sonnets compare?

TRISSOTIN.

Your little *rondeaux* are so charmingly sweet!

VADIUS.

Your madrigals all are o'erflowing with wit!

TRISSOTIN.

In ballads especially all you excel.

VADIUS.

And you make charades supernaturally well.

TRISSOTIN.

If France could appreciate half of your worth!

VADIUS.

If merit now met its due honors on earth —

TRISSOTIN.

You would roll through the streets in a carriage of gold.

VADIUS.

Every square in the city your statue would hold —  
Hem! this ballad of mine — your opinion upon it  
I should like to —

TRISSOTIN.

Pray sir, have you seen a short sonnet  
On the *Princess Urania's* fever?



VADIUS.

Just so;  
'Twas read at a party a few nights ago.

TRISSOTIN.

Do you know who's the author?

VADIUS.

I know not — nor care,  
For 'tis an exceedingly trifling affair.

TRISSOTIN.

Yet many admire it — or so they tell *me*.

VADIUS.

No matter for that — it's as bad as can be;  
And if you had seen it, you'd think so too.

TRISSOTIN.

Dear sir, I am sorry to differ from you:  
But I hold that its merit must every one strike.

VADIUS.

May Heaven preserve me from making the like!

TRISSOTIN.

I maintain that a better the world cannot show;  
For *I* am the author — yes, *I*, you must know.

VADIUS.

You?

TRISSOTIN.

I.

VADIUS.

Well, I can't think how this came to pass.

TRISSOTIN.

I had the bad luck not to please you, alas!

VADIUS.

No doubt there was something distracted my head,  
Or else the man spoiled it, so badly he read;  
But here is my ballad, concerning which — I —

TRISSOTIN.

The days of the ballad, methinks, are gone by;  
'Tis very old-fashioned and out of date quite.

VADIUS.

Yet, even now, many in ballads delight.

TRISSOTIN.

No matter; I think them decidedly flat.



VADIUS.

You think them! Perhaps they're no worse, sir, for that.

TRISSOTIN.

For pedants, indeed, they have charms beyond measure.

VADIUS.

And yet we perceive that they give *you* no pleasure.

TRISSOTIN.

You give others qualities found but in *you*.

*(They all rise.)*

VADIUS.

You call others names that are justly *your* due.

TRISSOTIN.

Go, blotter of foolscap — contemptible creature!

VADIUS.

Go, scribbler of sonnets, and butcher of metre!

TRISSOTIN.

Go, impudent plagiarist — pedant, get out!

VADIUS.

Go, rascal —

PHILAMINTA.

Good Lord, sirs, what *are* you about?

TRISSOTIN.

Go, go, strip your writings of each borrowed plume;  
Let the Greeks and the Latins their beauties resume.

VADIUS.

Go, you, and ask pardon of Venus and Bacchus  
For your lame imitations of jolly old Flaccus.

TRISSOTIN.

Remember your book's insignificant sale.

VADIUS.

Remember your bookseller driven to jail.

TRISSOTIN.

My fame is established; you slander in vain.

VADIUS.

Yes, go to the author of satires again.

TRISSOTIN.

Go, yourself.



## VADIUS.

With the greatest of pleasure I'd go.  
 He treats me with honor, as all people know.  
 He mentions me once, in the course of his sport,  
 As one of some authors in favor at court.  
 But he never once leaves you alone in his verses:  
 You are always the butt upon which he rehearses.

## TRISSOTIN.

Exactly — then *I* am more honored by far.  
 He puts *you* in the crowd, like a wretch, as you are;  
 He thinks by one blow you are easily slain,  
 Nor does you the honor to strike you again;  
 But he seeks me *alone*, as an enemy rare,  
 'Gainst whom he must bring every effort to bear:  
 And his blows, still repeated, convincingly show  
 He is never quite sure to have vanquished his foe.

## VADIUS.

My pen shall soon prove me — to your great disaster.

## TRISSOTIN.

And mine shall soon let you know who is your master.

## VADIUS.

I defy you in verse, prose, Latin, and Greek!

## TRISSOTIN.

You shall hear from me, sir, in the course of the week.

(*Exit Vadius.*)

## THE CONTRABANDIST.

From George Sand, *Knickerbocker*, 1840.

*Scene: A banquet in a garden.*

## CHORUS OF REVELLERS.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Let us strike the full goblets again and again,  
 Till their roseate lips shall be shattered in twain;  
 Come, wind of the evening, from balm-breathing bowers,  
 And strew on our foreheads the sweet orange flowers;  
 Let us drink to the day that unites us once more,  
 At the time-honored home of our sires of yore!

Brothers and friends, rejoice!



## CASTELLAN.

Come, friend of my childhood, come servitor mine,  
 And fill me a goblet of generous wine!  
 Those hands that have guided my steps when a child,  
 Must support me again, ere this night shall be o'er;  
 And when I am stammering, wine-overcome,  
 I shall then seem thy master no more;  
 And to me thou wilt say, as thou often hast said,  
 'My child, it is time to retire to thy bed.'

## CHORUS OF REVELLERS.

Fill up, fill up the merry wassail cup!  
 Free, free be the red wine poured!  
 For the servant good who so long hath stood  
 By the side of his noble lord!  
 Let his wrinkled brow grow joyous now!  
 Let him yield his spirit up  
 To the power divine of the god of wine,  
 Who smiles in the mantling cup!  
 'Tis Bacchus fair that lurketh there,  
 The fairest of gods is he:  
 Yes, even Cupid is a sluggard stupid,  
 Compared with the wine-god free.  
 Drink, drink old man, till thy gray-haired age  
 Hath vanished and fled away,  
 And thou art as young as the youngest page,  
 Who now doth thy word obey.  
 That thy lord may be, when deprived of thee,  
 Unable his couch to find,  
 And with us may stay, till the dawn of day,  
 Like a generous host, and kind.

## A GUEST.

And why dost thou, my charming fair,  
 Refuse our revelry to share?  
 Why dost thou take such scanty sips  
 As hardly wet thy rosy lips?  
 Come, fill thy goblet brimming high!  
 For if thou dost not drink as I,  
 In truth I shall begin to fear  
 I am to thee no longer dear;  
 And that thou shun'st the red wine's flow,  
 Lest it should make thee tell me so!



## CHORUS OF REVELLERS.

Drink, wives and sisters, drink with us,  
 And join us in our lay.  
 For Bacchus only those betrays,  
 Who would all else betray.  
 'Tis he unveils the hearts of men,  
 Like the trump of the judgment day:  
 The liar's words he falsifies,  
 And the truth of the true makes clear;  
 So ye who have no wicked thoughts,  
 Unmeet for friends to hear,  
 Let fall your words confidingly,  
 Without a shade of fear;  
 As the crystal drops in early spring,  
 At Sol's all-powerful will,  
 Start forth adown the ice-bound cliffs,  
 In many a limpid rill.

## CHORUS OF WOMEN.

Yes, we will drink and sing with you,  
 Nor shun the red wine flowing;  
 For we have nothing in our hearts,  
 That we should fear your knowing;  
 And if we say too much to-night,  
 'Twill be no cause of sorrow;  
 For well we know that none of you  
 Will think of it to-morrow!

## OMNES.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Let us strike the full goblet again and again,  
 Till their roseate lips shall be shattered in twain:  
 Come, wind of the evening, from balm-breathing bowers,  
 And strew on our foreheads the sweet orange flowers!  
 This, this is the day that unites us once more,  
 At the time-honored home of our sires of yore:  
 Let one and all rejoice!

## A GUEST.

I fear that the uproar of all our voices together,  
 may intoxicate us sooner than the wine. Let us suffer  
 the jolly god to take possession of us slowly, and gra-  
 dually to infuse into our veins his genial influence. Let  
 the youngest of us sing some popular air, and we will  
 repeat the chorus only.



## BOY.

Here is a lay of the mountains, which you must all remember. It often draws tears from the eyes of those who hear it in foreign lands.

## CHORUS.

Ay, sing, my boy, sing, make no delay!  
 And let each, as the chorus he swells to day,  
 Bless his good angel that now, once more,  
 He sees the home of his sires of yore:  
     Let one and all rejoice!

## BOY.

'I who a contrabandist am,  
 A noble life I lead;  
 I scour the mountains night and day,  
 Or down to the hamlet speed,  
 To sport with the lovely maidens there;  
 And when the guard comes by,  
 I clasp the spur to my good black steed,  
 And back to the mountains fly!  
 Huzza! huzza! my good black steed,  
 The guard is just in view;  
 Huzza! huzza! my good black steed!  
 Ye maidens fair, adieu!

## CHORUS.

'Huzza! huzza! my good black steed!  
 The guard is just in view;  
 Huzza! huzza! my good black steed!  
 Ye maidens fair, adieu!  
     Rejoice! Rejoice!  
 Let us strike the full goblets again and again,  
 Till their roseate lips —'

## CASTELLAN.

Ha! who is this pilgrim that issues from the forest, followed by a famished dog, black as night? He approaches us with an uncertain step. He seems worn out with fatigue. Fill him a generous cup. Let him drink to his far-off home and absent friends.

## CHORUS.

Tired wanderer, the cup of joy come fill with us, and drain  
 To the far-off home and absent friends thou ne'er may'st  
 see again.



## THE STRANGER.

Ungrateful country, friends untrue,  
 I never more will drink to you!  
 Accursed for ever may ye live,  
 Who a brother thus like a beggar receive!  
 For ever may ye be forgot,  
 Who a former friend remember not!  
 The worthless cup ye bid me 'take,  
 (A vulgar alma,) I fain would break,  
 And in that wine would bathe my feet,  
 That yields my heart no genial heat.  
 False is your friendship, bad your wine,  
 And your welcome cold as this lot of mine!

## CHORUS.

Who art thou, who alone darest to beard us all in  
 the home of our sires? — who boastest that thou art  
 one of us? — who pourest out in the dust the cup of  
 joy and hospitality?

## STRANGER.

Who am I? I will tell you. I am an unfortunate  
 man, and therefore none of you remember me. Had I  
 come among you in my former splendor, you would all  
 have run to meet me, and the fairest of your dames  
 would have poured for me the stirrup-cup in a golden  
 goblet. But I come alone, with no pomp of equipage  
 — no servants, horses, nor dogs: the gold of my habit  
 is tarnished by sun and rain; my cheeks are hollowed,  
 and my forehead sinks under the weight of my lasting  
 cares, like that of Atlas beneath the burthen of the  
 world. Why do you gaze at me so stupidly? Are you  
 not ashamed to be surprised in these bacchanalian orgies,  
 by him who fondly thought that you were even now  
 lamenting his absence? Come, rise! Let the proudest  
 among you yield me his seat by the side of your fairest  
 dame.

## CASTELLAN.

Stranger, thou takest liberties with us which we  
 would not permit, were not this a grand festal day. But  
 as, during the saturnalia, slaves were permitted to lord  
 it over their masters, so on this day, devoted to the



rites of hospitality, we are willing to laugh at the jokes of a ragged vagrant, who calls himself our brother and our equal.

STRANGER.

The wanderer, my gracious hosts, who thus among you stands,

No longer is your equal now, though born in kindred lands:  
But once he was your equal, ye who, without alloy  
Of care or anguish, merrily do quaff the cup of joy.

CHORUS.

And who art thou, then? Tell us, eccentric stranger,  
and raise to thy parched lips the cup of joy.

STRANGER.

Every cup is filled with gall for him who has no longer friends nor country; and since ye would know who I am, be assured, O children of joy, that I who have drunk the cup of life to the dregs, am greater than you; for grief has made me greater and more powerful than the greatest and most powerful among you.

CASTELLAN.

Stranger, thy boldness amuses me; if I mistake not, thou art a street poet; an improvisator of drolleries; an expert buffoon; go on, and since it is thy whim not to drink, drink not, but continue to amuse us with thy vagaries, while we drain the cup of joy.

LA HERMOSA.

My beloved! my friends! Sir Castellan! this man asserts that he is greater than any of you; but you should pardon his boldness, for he has also said that he is the most unfortunate of men. Do not, I beseech you, torment him with your raillery, but prevail upon him to tell us his story.

CASTELLAN.

Come, then, pilgrim, since La Hermosa has taken thee under her kind protection, tell us thy misfortunes, and we, amid our joy, will hear them with pity, for love of her.



## STRANGER.

Castellan, I have something else to think of beside your amusement. I am neither improvisator, nor singer, nor buffoon. I laugh, 'tis true, and that often; but with a secret, a gloomy, and a despairing laughter, as I look upon the crimes and the woes of men. Maiden, I have naught to tell. The history of all my misfortunes is comprised in this one sentence: *I am a man.*

## LA HERMOSA.

Unfortunate man! I feel for thee unutterable compassion. Look at him, my friends; do you not seem to recognize those features, so changed by grief? Look at him, my dear Diego; truly, I have seen that face in a dream, or else it is the phantom of one whom I have loved.

## DIEGO.

Hermosa, you are too compassionate. I have never met that gloomy face in all my travels. If it has appeared to you in a dream, that dream was doubtless a night-mare, attendant on a bad supper. Nevertheless, if he will tell us his story, I am willing to lay aside my anger.

## CHORUS.

If he is willing to relate.  
 Th' adventures he has known,  
 Here let him fill the cup of joy,  
 And gaily drain it down.  
 But if he will nor speak nor drink,  
 At once to Pluto going,  
 There let him drain the gall of hate,  
 From a cup of iron glowing!

## BOY.

With a timid voice, on bended knee, I would make bold to offer a suggestion to my lord. This stranger has been attracted toward us by the chorus of my song. When I commenced singing, he was winding along the skirts of the wood, in the direction of the plain; but suddenly, as if his ear were struck with agreeable sounds, he returned upon his steps; twice or thrice he stopped



to listen, and when I finished, he had almost reached us. He asserts that he is one of your old friends; that you once were his companions; that this is his native land. Well, then, let him sing my song, and if he can repeat it all without a mistake, we cannot doubt that he was born among our mountains.

CASTELLAN.

Be it so. Thou hast well spoken, young page, and I approve of thy advice, for La Hermosa smiles.

CHORUS.

Young page, thou hast well spoken;  
 Our fairest's smile we see;  
 Of her consent it is the token,  
 And our host approves of thee.  
 Fill, then! and let the stranger  
 First sing our country's lay,  
 Then drain with us, no more a ranger,  
 The cup of joy to-day.

STRANGER.

'Tis well; I consent. Listen, then, and let none interrupt me.

'I — I — I —'

CHORUS.

Bravo! He knows the first syllable perfectly!

STRANGER.

Silence!

I who a youthful goatherd am —

CHORUS.

No! no! That is not it!

LA HERMOSA.

Let him go on; he has a good voice.

STRANGER.

I who a youthful goatherd am,  
 A pleasant life I lead:  
 A careless child of the mountain wild,  
 A pleasant life indeed!  
 I from afar the town behold,  
 And never to this hour  
 Have seen, save from afar, the gold  
 Of the cathedral's tower.



All the fair maidens love I well,  
 Within the vallies near;  
 But more than all who there do dwell,  
 I love my sister dear:  
 Doloris, purest of the pure,  
 And fairest of the fair,  
 Who under those old cedars lies,  
 Beneath the green turf there!  
 Alas, my life is nought but tears —  
 My woes I cannot bear!

DIEGO.

What does the man mean by this strange medley?  
 His sister whom he loves as alive, and bewails as dead,  
 at the same time! His pleasant life on the mountain,  
 and immediately after, his life dissolved in tears! Her-  
 mosa, his voice is clear, but his head is decidedly muddy.

LA HERMOSA.

Heavens! I have heard of a certain Doloris, whose  
 brother —

DIEGO.

Hermosa, you are too compassionate, indeed. Let  
 this adventurer sing the song of our country, or let him  
 go drain the cup of tears with Satan!

CHORUS.

Let him go drain the cup of tears  
 In the depths of gloomy Tartarus,  
 If he will not sing our country's song,  
 And drain the cup of joy with us.

STRANGER.

Let me alone a moment. My memory returns. I  
 have confounded two stanzas of the song. This is the first:

I who a youthful goatherd am,  
 An easy life I lead;  
 I on the mountain tend my flock,  
 Or rest on the verdant mead.  
 The gilded towers I never yet,  
 Save from afar, did view.  
 The maidens fair of the vale I love,  
 And I pull the violets blue,  
 To weave them garlands far less bright  
 Than their eyes of azure hue.



And when I hear the vesper bell,  
 And evening's shades draw nigh,  
 I call to me my buck-goat black,  
 And back to the mountains hie.  
 Come hither, come hither, my buck-goat black!  
 The night obscures our view:  
 Lead on the flock, my buck-goat black!  
 Ye maidens fair, adieu!

CASTELLAN.

Well sung, pilgrim! But this is not the song — not even a stanza of it: thou hast changed the subject. Come, try again; for thy voice is good, and thy imagination more fertile than thy memory is faithful.

CHORUS.

In our song let him join; let him moisten with wine  
 His lips, that he breath may regain:  
 But our own native lay he must sing us to-day,  
 If the full cup of joy he would drain.

STRANGER.

I — I — Stop a moment. Ah, I have it:  
 I who a dashing scholar am,  
 A jovial life I lead:  
 Through Salamanca's learned courts,  
 By day and night I speed.  
 And oft beyond the ramparts pass,  
 Those female forms to view,  
 Who flit like goblins through the night,  
 The stormy night untrue;  
 The mother of all treacheries;  
 Accursed may she be!  
 The mother of all crimes and woes —  
 Ah, I am wrong! That is not it.

DIEGO.

By Jove! it is time for him to find it out! He is not remembering at all, but inventing, from one stanza to another.

CHORUS.

Silence! silence! Hear him: he has a good voice.



## STRANGER.

And when along a narrow lane,  
 A doctor old and sly,  
 Beneath my fair one's balcony —  
 Comes slowly stealing by,  
 I break my guitar on the old pedant's head,  
 And off to the mountains fly.  
 Take that! take that! old pedant black!  
 Fit recompense for you;  
 Take that! take that! old pedant black!  
 Bid the maidens fair adieu!

## CHORUS.

Bravo! An amusing song! Let us repeat the chorus:  
 Take that! take that! old pedant black!  
 Fit recompense for you!  
 Take that! take that! old pedant black!  
 Bid the maidens fair adieu.

## CASTELLAN.

Go on, my noble improvisator; thou hast not sung  
 the song of our country, and I am glad of it, for thine  
 pleases me; but thou knowest our bargain. It must be  
 honorably fulfilled, if thou wouldst drain with us the cup  
 of joy.

## CHORUS.

Try, stranger, once more, and wet as before  
 Thy lips, thy spent breath to regain;  
 But our own country's lay thou must sing us to-day,  
 If the full cup of joy thou wouldst drain.

## STRANGER.

Let me alone, I pray you. My thoughts overwhelm  
 and confound me. Ah! my memory returns: listen:  
 I — I — Now I have it:

I who a luckless lover am,  
 A mournful life I lead:  
 I weep in the mountains night and day,  
 With a heart that aye doth bleed;  
 I sometimes to th' accursed town  
 By night return once more,  
 To sit beneath her balcony,  
 Whose love for me is o'er.



My rival passeth! — forth I spring —  
 Its point my poiniard stains  
 In the black blood, the sluggish ink,  
 That flows in a pedant's veins:  
 Die! die! thou wretch whom nature hates!  
 And thou deceitful fair,  
 Thou never more shalt man delude —'

But I am wrong — wandering again; I always con-  
 found the first and second stanzas, in my impatience.  
 Listen; this is it:

But ha! the holy brotherhood!  
 Those dreaded froms I view:  
 Back to thy sheath, my poiniard good!  
 The alguazils pursue.  
 Back to thy sheath, my poiniard good!  
 Thou maiden false, adieu!

CHORUS.

Back to thy sheath, my poiniard good!  
 The alguazils pursue:  
 Back to thy sheath, my poiniard good!  
 Thou maiden false, adieu!

CASTELLAN.

Yet once more, pilgrim! Thou wanderest so adroitly,  
 that it is impossible thou canst not find the way again.  
 Try once more!

CHORUS

Try, stranger, once more, and wet as before  
 Thy lips, thy spent breath to regain;  
 For our own country's lay thou must sing us to-day,  
 If the full cup of joy thou wouldst drain.

STRANGER.

Were I to sing you that lay which is imprinted on  
 my memory in characters never to be effaced, the wine  
 of your cups would turn into tears; ay, into gall, per-  
 haps, or black blood!

CASTELLAN.

Go on, eccentric singer, and fear not. We love thy  
 songs; and the potency of our cups can soon lay all the  
 spirits of darkness.



## CHORUS.

Proceed, noble singer, again!  
 No terrors our hearts can annoy;  
 The spirits of darkness we hold in disdain,  
 While crowning the full cup of joy.

## STRANGER.

I who a wretched murderer am,  
 A frightful life I lead;  
 By night I lurk in gloomy caves,  
 Where toads and adders breed.  
 By day, in search of herbs and roots,  
 I scour the forests drear,  
 And strive once more the voice of man,  
 Though from afar, to hear.  
 My feet are mangled; on my brow  
 The mark of Cain I bear;  
 My voice is as the torrents hoarse,  
 With whom my home I share:  
 My soul is rugged as the cliffs,  
 Who now my comrades are.  
 And when the fatal hour draws nigh,  
 Marked by the rolling spheres,  
 A bloody star shoots up the sky,  
 A spectre black appears.  
 And till that star in ocean sets,  
 O'er cliff, and crag, and thorn,  
 Close in the gloomy phantom's track,  
 With frantic speed, I'm borne.  
 March on, march on, thou spectre black!  
 I follow close behind;  
 March on, march on, thou spectre black!  
 Athwart the stormy wind.

Well, why do you not repeat the chorus? Why do you draw your cups away from mine? Cowards and visionaries, what fear ye?

## CASTELLAN:

Pilgrim, if this is the last stanza of thy song, and the last chapter of thy history; if thy words, thy appearance, and thy conduct lie not; if thou art indeed a murderer —'



STRANGER.

What! — are you afraid too?

LA HERMOSA: (*aside, gazing on the stranger.*)

Yet he is so handsome!

STRANGER: (*bursting into a laugh.*)

Ha! ha! ha! You will make me die of laughter!  
Ha! ha! ha! All these brave champions, these intrepid  
bacchanals, see them, paler than their cups of agate!  
Look out! look out! Room for the spectre! Well, do  
you see it? But no; 'tis a different shade; it appears to  
me! I see it; I hear it! Listen to its song:

I who a gallant warrior am,  
A glorious life I lead;  
My foe I in the mountains hold,  
In nought can he succeed.  
For there I press and weary him,  
I harass and affright;  
I shut him up in dark defiles,  
Nor give him chance of flight.  
His hosts with terror I consume,  
His bloody flag tear down,  
And trample 'neath my courser's feet  
His power and his renown.  
And when the thrilling clarion sounds,  
I charge impetuously;  
Hurrah! hurrah! my good black crest!  
On! on to victory!  
My plume, half-broken by the balls,  
Floats to the wind so free!

CHORUS.

Hurrah! hurrah! my good black crest!  
On! on to victory!  
My plume, though broken by the balls,  
Shall yet my triumph see.

CASTELLAN.

He sings right well: his eyes sparkle; his hand  
makes the wine of his cup boil over. Drain that cup, my  
brave singer; thou hast well deserved it; but if thou  
wouldst sit among us, and drink till night, and from night  
till morning, thou must sing the song of our country.



## CHORUS.

Thou must sing us to-day, O stranger! the lay  
 Of our own native mountain and plain,  
 If thou till the morrow wouldst wash away sorrow,  
 And the full cup of joy with us drain.

## STRANGER.

I will, but it must be *when* I please, and *as* I please.  
 Meanwhile, hear this stanza:

I who a careless rover am,  
 A reckless life I lead;  
 I wander from the crowded town,  
 And off to the mountains speed;  
 And thence I bear the maidens fair,  
 To my mansion rich and gay,  
 Where we whisper our loves in myrtle groves,  
 And wile the time away;  
 And when ennui, like a sable owl,  
 O'ershadows me in air,  
 I fill my goblet to the brim,  
 And I drown the bird of care.  
 Drink, drink, and die, thou night-bird black!  
 Drink, drink of the mantling cup,  
 'Tis life to me, 'tis death to thee!  
 We both must drink it up.  
 Back to thy nest on the church-yard yew!  
 On the hapless victim's tomb,  
 Go, on the spectre's shoulder perch!  
 Thy own, thy proper home.

Do you like that? Perhaps I am wrong again. Will  
 you hear another?

I who an humble hermit am,  
 A pious life lead I;  
 I watch and pray by night and day,  
 In my cell on the mountain high.  
 I lodge the weary pilgrims there,  
 I give their cares relief;  
 I expiate their sins and mine,  
 By penitential grief.  
 And when the moon in heaven rides high,  
 And the bright stars look pale,  
 And nought is heard but the chamois' cry,  
 Borne faintly on the gale,



Low on the lonely heath kneel I,  
And raise my suppliant wail.

PRAYER.

To thee in this my solitude, I lift my humble cry,  
And in the silent desert before thee weeping lie:  
Ye splendors of the starry night, ye hosts of heaven above,  
O witness ye my sorrow, and witness ye my love!  
And ye, O guardian angels, bright messengers, who bear  
From heaven to earth our pardon, as from earth to heaven  
our prayer,  
Who float amid the harmony of the celestial spheres,  
Who in the moon's mild beams descend to this our vale of  
tears,  
Who over us, but all unseen, direct your rapid flight,  
With the circles of the rolling stars, and the gloomy  
veil of night:  
Weep, weep with me; repeat my prayers; to you for aid I fly,  
Receive my tears of penitence, and bear them to the sky,  
And for my pardon plead with Him who hears the sinner's cry.

I have changed the measure. Does it please you  
now? Come, then, join in the refrain:

To me a poor black penitent, O be thy mercy given!  
It comes! and peace on earth is mine, and mercy, sent  
from heaven.

CHORUS.

To thee, to thee, black penitent, be peace and mercy given!  
Be peace on earth for ever thine, and mercy sent from heaven.

CASTELLAN.

If God absolves thee, pilgrim, the justice of men  
cannot exact more than that of heaven. Seat thyself,  
and be purified from thy crimes by the tears of repen-  
tance; be cheered in thy calamity by the libations of joy.

STRANGER.

My crimes! my repentance! your pity! No, no, my  
good friends; the song does not finish thus. You must  
hear yet another stanza:

I who a bay-crowned poet am,  
I gods and men despise:  
I have songs for grief, and songs for joy,  
For the shades, and for the skies.



A rhyme I have for the murd'ers knife,  
 And one for the bloody fray,  
 Another yet for love, and still  
 For repentance, one more lay.  
 'Tis thus I breathe my soul in verse,  
 And take no thought of time.  
 For what to me is the universe,  
 If I only have my rhyme?  
 And when ideas begin to fail,  
 Oh then I seize my lyre,  
 And make its chords ring merrily out,  
 Which fools with joy inspire.  
 Sound out! sound out! my lyre-chord good!  
 Thou dost ideas supply;  
 Sound out! sound out! let reason go!  
 The rhyme's the thing, say I.

CASTELLAN.

Dost thou mock our hospitality, audacious poet! Hast  
 thou not a ready song, a complete melody? We have  
 listened to thee an hour, subjected by turns to the sway  
 of all the various emotions with which thou didst inspire  
 us; and hardly hast thou raised to the skies a pious  
 strain, when thou resumest the tone of a fiend, to laugh  
 at God, at thy fellow men, and at thyself. Sing us,  
 then, at least the song of our country, or we will wrest  
 from thy hands the cup of joy.

CHORUS.

Yes, sing our native lay, or we  
 The cup of joy will wrest from thee.

STRANGER.

O God of shepherds, hear me! and thou, O Mary, hear!  
 Thou mother mild of heaven, to whom the simple soul is dear;  
 O God of young hearts, hear me! and thou, O Mary, hear!  
 Who dost inspire the lover, and confirm his vow sincere:  
 O God of battles, hear me! and thou, O Mary, hear!  
 Who dost preserve the valiant, and fill the foe with fear:  
 O God of hermits, hear me! and thou, O Mary, hear!  
 Protectress of the pious, who lov'st the sacred tear:  
 Oh God of poets, hear me! and thou, O Mary, hear!  
 Thou most harmonious melody of the celestial sphere!  
 Sustain the weary pilgrim, conduct the traveller bold,  
 Preserve the gallant warrior, visit the hermit old;



Smile, smile upon the poet, receive benignantly  
 The incense of his heart, which now he offers unto thee;  
 Like to the mingled perfume of every flower that grows,  
 Whose odor on this barren earth, thou didst to him disclose.

Well, does the refrain embarrass you? You cannot  
 follow the measure? Listen then, while I begin again:

I who a youthful goatherd am,  
 Would give, most willingly,  
 Full all the flocks th' sierra feeds,  
 If my fair would smile on me.  
 I who a dashing scholar am,  
 Would burn my books thrice o'er,  
 For a kiss, beneath the balcony,  
 Of her whom I adore.  
 I who a happy lover am,  
 Would give my love's caresses,  
 For one good blow at a pedant's head,  
 If e'er he her addresses;  
 I who a cheated lover am,  
 My very soul would sell,  
 To sheathe my poniard in the heart,  
 Of him she loves so well!  
 I who a hunted murd'rer am,  
 Love, vengeance, all, would give,  
 If as a glorious conqueror,  
 I might one moment live;  
 I who a conq'ring warrior am,  
 Would give my triumph's palms,  
 For but an instant of repose  
 From my troubled conscience' qualms:  
 I who a pious hermit am,  
 Would yield my hopes of heaven,  
 Were, in return, for but an hour,  
 The poet's phrenzy given;  
 I who at length a poet am,  
 My garland of gold so gay,  
 For but one spark of heavenly fire;  
 Would gladly give away;  
 But when my song doth her pinions ope,  
 And my proud foot spurns the ground,  
 And the music of the spheres I hope  
 To hear in the distance sound,



Some fiend accursed, a thick black cloud  
 Like a gloomy veil, doth roll  
 All, all around my luckless head,  
 Around my branded soul!  
 Lost, gasping, tired, I trembling float  
 'Twixt hope and grim despair,  
 'Twixt light from heaven, and shades of hell  
 'Twixt blasphemy and prayer;  
 And mourning cry, as to earth fall I,  
 Back, back to my native clay,  
 Alas! alas! that cloud-veil black!  
 My pinions, where are they?"

CHORUS.

Alas! alas! that cloud-veil black!  
 My pinions, where are they?

CASTELLAN.

Sit down, sit down, noble singer; thou hast conquered us.

DIEGO.

He has not sung the song of our country; not a single verse of it.

LA HERMOSA.

He has sung better than any of us. Stranger, take this branch of red sage; dip it in thy cup, and sing for me.

STRANGER.

I sing for no one, but only to please myself, when the whim takes me. Maiden, I accept thy gift. The spectre waits for me, in the forest. Adieu, credulous host! Adieu, all ye vulgar bacchanals, who ask the poet for sour wine, when he brings you the nectar of heaven. Sing your song of the country by yourselves! For my own part, the country makes me sick, and the wine of the country sicker.

Come, come with me, my poor black dog!

I have no friend but you;

'Tis time, my dog, for us to go:

Ye maidens fair, adieu!

*(Exit.)*

CASTELLAN.

A strange man!



DIEGO.

A bandit, I'll wager! Let us arrest him, and throw him into prison.

LA HERMOSA.

The walls would fall before his song; the spirits of heaven would descend to loose his chains.

BOY.

My lord, you promised to own him for your friend and countryman, if he sang the song of our country. Hear him now, on the summit of the hill:

STRANGER. (*from the hill.*)

'I who a contrabandist am,  
A noble life I lead;  
I scour the mountains night and day,  
Or down to the hamlet's speed,  
To sport with the lovely maidens there,  
And when the guard comes by,  
I clap the spur to my good black steed,  
And back to the mountains fly:  
Huzza! huzza! my good black steed!  
The guard is just in view,  
Huzza! huzza! my good black steed!  
Ye maidens fair, adieu!

DIEGO.

By heavens, I know him now; for he dons his red mantle; he mounts his horse; he tears off his false beard, and no longer disguises his voice! 'Tis José, the famous Contrabandist; the accursed bandit; and I captain of the guards, who was charged with his arrest! After him, my friends! — after him!

CASTELLAN.

No, indeed; he is a noble child of the mountains, who was a scholar, a lover, and a poet, and who, it is said, became a bandit chief in consequence of his political sentiments.

DIEGO.

Or in consequence of a murder.

LA HERMOSA.

Or in consequence of a love affair.



## CASTELLAN.

No matter; he has tricked you most gloriously, Diego; and while imposing upon us, he has both excited and charmed us. God speed him! and may nothing more trouble this festal day, this day devoted to joy!

## CHORUS.

Let nothing more our mirth alloy,  
 Drain we the brimming cups of joy!  
*(They sing in full chorus the song of the Contrabandist.)*

## FINAL CHORUS.

Rejoice! Rejoice!  
 Let us strike the full goblets again and again,  
 Till their roseate lips shall be shattered in twain.  
 Come wind of the evening from balm-breathing bowers,  
 And strew on our foreheads the sweet orange flowers.  
 Fill, fill up the cups! Let us drink and be gay,  
 And celebrate duly this festival day:

Let one and all rejoice!

STRANGER, *(in the distance.)*

Amen!

OMNES.

Amen!

## WALTER OF ACQUITAINE'S DEATH-SONG.\*

A free translation from the French of L. Picket.

*Horse Journal 1853.*

COME! I invite you, men of arms, that love the battle's  
 strife,  
 To hear a mournful history, the last song of my life.  
 Then listen warrior, listen clerk, before my days are sped:  
 My name is Walter of Aquitaine; from Attila's camp I fled.  
 I fled from the camp of Attila, I, Walter of Aquitaines.

\* It must not be for often that the modern poet has changed the catastrophe of the old Monkish epic according to which Walter and Hildegund escaped the pursuit of their evening.



Along with me fair Hildegund was flying o'er the fields;  
 Her sire was king of Burgundy and lord of many shields.  
 The girl is dead, — I weep for her, — both wept and ven-  
 ged is she;

And I am going soon to die, — in death I shall be free.  
 My dying hour brings liberty to Walter of Acquitaine.

We took across the country, much treasure in our flight:  
 We had goodly store of diamonds, and cups of jewels bright;  
 We fled that camp of savages, like lovers true and brave,  
 For neither she nor I was born to be the foeman's slave.  
 Neither Hildegund of Burgundy, nor Walter of Acquitaine.

I had a coat of tempered steel, a sword of trenchant blade;  
 My chargers step was firm and proud, and she the darling  
 maid —

Her little heart, with charming fear, on mine beat lovingly.  
 To think it was but yesterday all this belonged to me!  
 All this belonged but yesterday to Walter of Acquitaine.

We rested on a mountain with many a steep ascent;  
 She slept upon my knees when the day was fairly spent, —  
 All round us utter silence and darkening shades of night,  
 As if both earth and heaven were watching o'er our flight. *h*  
 But weary with our flight that day was Walter of Acquitaine.

The leaves were bright in full monlight, when she awoke  
 from sleep.

"To-morrow we will go," said I; the watch till morning keep.  
 Yes watch and pray the while I lay my head upon thy breast;  
 Be not too lightly terrified; all nature is at rest. *h*  
 Though an army come, call quietly on Walter of Acquitaine.

Alas! that night was very short, our foes were very near, —  
 My paradise was but a dream; they chased and found us here.  
 I felt her soft lip quivering on mine before she spoke, —  
 "Walter the foe!" her words were slow, but quickly I awoke.  
 It was a gloomy wedding night for Walter of Acquitaine.

When first I saw their lances scale the summit of the hill,  
 It grieved me to have rested there, and brought her to such ill.  
 "They shall not have thee, Hildegund; so God be but our aid!  
 Fear nothing, we can die but once," no other word I said.  
 No other word to Hildegund said Walter of Acquitaine.



I saw her lip just tremble with a sad and feverish smile;  
 A quick and chilling shudder ran through all her limbs the  
     while;  
 And her eye was ever following the spears in dark array,  
 That mounted up from bush to bush their sure and sullen way,  
 That mounted through the thicket dense to Walter of  
     Acquitaine.

On one side rolled the mountain stream, on one side came  
     the foe,  
 Her bridal gifts were hanging at my charger's saddle bow;  
 My eager hands unloosed the bands of the ample chests he  
     bore,  
 I emptied down the precipice her gems and golden store.  
 There was nothing left to Hildegund but Walter of Acquitaine.

"There, let the torrent take thy wealth!" all mad with rage  
     I cried;  
 Let courser go, and palfrey too! what need we more to ride?  
 We cannot be too light to die; my love what thinkest thou?  
 So we but die together. — Wo to the foremost now!  
 Wo to the first that meet the steel of Walter of Acquitaine."

Then, like a scythe whose spreading sweep lays low the  
     meadows pride,  
 My falchion bright fell left and right, and a Hun drop-  
     ped on each side.  
 My Hildegund was on her knees, close, close behind me  
     there  
 I had struck down ten of their boldest men before she  
     said one prayer;  
 The ten best men of Attila, I, Walter of Acquitaine.

But their swarming train poured in like rain, and she  
     was all their aim;  
 I fought and hewed their multitude, still on and on they  
     came,  
 Till the press of the throng became so strong, they tore  
     the girl away;  
 I howled for spite, they mocked my plight, but I cleft  
     their thick array,  
 And came to the side of Hildegund, I Walter of Acquitaine.



With the savage band on either hand, she wept and tore her hair.

Poor innocent! to my heart it went to see her sobbing there. They would have borne her off alive; it needed but a blow. Her head I split — I'm proud of it — I saved my true love so. I killed my love, to save my love, I, Walter of Aquitaine.

Pierced like a sieve and streaming blood, but alive enough to kill;

I drove them back to seek for help, and scared them down the hill.

They left me there by Hildegund, where, in her blood, she slept;

I held her with a trembling hand, and knelt by her and wept. There was none to weep for Hildegund but Walter of Aquitaine.

My life is weary, Hildegund, my weapon clogged with slain. Close to thy face I take my place; here come the Huns again!

My strength and blood are ebbing fast, my days will soon be o'er,

But to spread a bed for us two dead, I want to kill some more.

A funeral couch for Hildegund and Walter of Aquitaine.

## SCRAPS FROM A PROJECTED TRANSLATION OF THE NIBELUNGEN LIED.

### THE HEROINE.

FROM THE FIRST ADVENTURE.

Und ist in alten maren

u. s. w.

TO us in ancient story be many wonders told  
Of heroes great in glory, of courage manifold;  
Of joyaunces and high-times, of weeping and of wail,  
Of keenest worthies' strife ye may now hear the wondrous tale.



A maiden full noble in Burgundy upgrew,  
 So might be none fairer the lands of earth all through.  
 Criemhilt was she y-cleped and was a lovely maid,  
 For sake of whom the life was lost of many a gallant blade.

There were three kings that watched her, three kings  
 of might and name,  
 Günther and Gemot those heroes without blame,  
 And Giselher the youthful a choice and gallant blade,  
 These princes had to keep her, their sister was the maid.

### HER DREAM.

In disen hohen eren

U. S. W.

A dream dreamed Chriemhilt who walked in virtue's ways,  
 That she a wild falcon had trained for many days.  
 T'was worried by two eagles, before her sight full plain:  
 Could nought in this world happen to give her greater pain.

This dream she to her mother dame Ute did relate.  
 Her mother could not give her presage of better fate.  
 "The falcon that thou rearedst, a noble man is he.  
 So God be not his safe-guard thou'lt lose him speedily."

My well-beloved mother, why name you man to me?  
 Without love of gallant will I forever be.  
 So will I stay a fair maid until my dying day  
 And wed the love of mortal man I never, never may.

Abjure it not so stoutly then did her mother say  
 If thou wouldst be heart-gladdened in this world all  
 thy day,  
 That cometh through man's love alone thou wilt be very fair,  
 And therefore God assigns thee a knight beyond compare.

"Let be" she said "thy counsel, O lady mother mine!  
 It hath to many women been clearer than sunshine  
 That sorrow is love's wages. This have they to lament.  
 So no mishap befall me, to lack both I'm content."

Thus in her lofty virtue that she kept in its prime  
 Lived this noble maiden a long and joyous time.  
 For that she knew of no man whom she could truly love.  
 Yet after she with honor a good knight's wife did prove.



He was the very falcon the dream to her depicted,  
Explained her by her mother. What vengeance she inflicted.  
Upon her nearest kinsmen, by whom the deed was done!  
So through the death of him alone died many a mother's son.

## THE HERO.

FROM THE SECOND ADVENTURE.

Do wuchs in Niederlanden

U. S. W.

There grew up in the Lowlands a noble monarch's child.  
His father's name was Sigemund, Sigelind his mother mild.  
'Twas in a wealthy stronghold and one well known to fame;  
The Rhine it lay alongside, and Santen was its name.

Siegfried he was y-cleped, that self same gallant good,  
To many realms he wandered in high and daring mood.  
In prowess great of person to many lands rode he.  
Oh what impetuous heroes he found in Burgundy!

Before this valiant warrior to manhood well had grown  
He had achieved such marvels with his own hand alone  
That ever more about him men might both sing and say  
And we might wonder at him unto this very day.

## THEIR MEETING.

FROM THE THIRD ADVENTURE.

Nu gie diu minneliche

U. S. W.

Forth came the lovely maiden as comes the morning red,  
The gloomy clouds disparting: much care the gallant fled,  
Who in his heart had borne it a long and weary way;  
In all her bloom before him he saw the lovely May.

From forth her garments glittered full many a jewel rare;  
Her rosy-red complexion shone marvellously fair:  
However loth to own it, yet must men all agree  
That on the earth was never so fair a thing as she.

As floats the silver full-moon the starry host before,  
And light so clear and mellow down through the clouds  
doth pour,  
So shone she in her beauty before each other dame;  
Well might the hearts of many be fluttered as she came!



The chamberlains so wealthy before her led the way;  
 The heroes high in spirit; they would not quiet stay;  
 To see the lovely maiden they pressed to and fro.  
 To Siegfried, the hero, that was both joy and woe.

Within himself thus spake he, "How can it ever be  
 That I should win thy love? 'Tis an idle fantasy.  
 Yet must I go without thee, then were I better dead."  
 And aye as he thought on her his face turned white and red.

There did the son of Sieglind before them fairly stand  
 As he were limned on parchment by cunning master's hand;  
 And every one that saw him owned willingly his worth,  
 "Sure such a gallant hero was never seen on earth."

Trin. Coll., Cant., 1842.

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## LEONORA.

YALE LITERARY MAGAZINE, 1840.

Republished in the Evening Post January 1847.

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(This I believe to be the first version of Bürgers famous ballad ever published in the metre of the original. At the same time I make the assertion with diffidence, knowing how difficult it is to prove a negative of this sort. In the Autumn of 1846 Clarence Mangan contributed to the Dublin University Magazine what he supposed to be the first version ever made in the original metre, and, some years later, Albert Smith published one for which he advanced the same claim. On the appearance of Mangan's translation Mr. Cullen Bryant did me the honor to approve of and republish mine.)

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LEONORA, as the day dawned red

Upstarts from dream dismaying,  
 "Art untrue, William, or art dead?"

How long wilt be delaying?  
 He had gone with King Frederick's might  
 Upon the field of Prague to fight.

No letters came declaring  
 If he still well were faring.



The monarch and the empress proud  
 Of lengthened war fatigued,  
 Their haughty hearts at last had bowed,  
 And had together leagued,  
 And all the host with shout and song  
 And clang of drum both loud and long.  
 And radiant garlands wearing,  
 Were to their homes repairing.

And here and there and everywhere  
 O'er road and bridges, yearning  
 With joy, did throng both old and young  
 To meet their friends returning.  
 "Thank God!" the wives and children cried  
 And "Welcome!" many a joyful bride  
 But none Leonora meeteth,  
 None kisseth her or greeteth.

She searched the ranks right through and through,  
 She asked whoe'er came nigh her,  
 But no one aught of William knew  
 Of all that passed by her,  
 So when the army all had passed  
 Herself to Earth she wildly cast,  
 Her raven ringlets tearing.  
 With countenance despairing.

Her mother hastens to the place,  
 "May God in pity view thee!"  
 And clasps her in her fond embrace,  
 "Child, what hath happend to thee?"  
 "O mother, mother, gone is gone!  
 Farewell the world and all thereon!  
 With God is no compassion,  
 Oh me, my hopeless passion!"

"Help, help, Oh God! Look kindly down!  
 My Child, to prayer apply thee.  
 What God does, for the best is done;  
 He will with pity eye thee."  
 "Oh mother, idle fantasy!  
 God has not done the best for me.  
 What, what can prayer avail me?  
 It must from henceforth fail me."



„Help, God! who knows the Father, knows  
 He helps his Children grieving.  
 The sacrament shall cure thy woes,  
 With holy, power relieving.”  
 “O mother, for what tortures me  
 No sacrament relief can be;  
 No sacrament recover  
 Alive my lifeless lover.”

“Hear, child, what if in Hungary  
 The false one is undoing  
 His plighted word and faith to thee,  
 Some other maiden wooing?  
 Cease, child, his falsehood to deplore;  
 His days shall never prosper more.  
 When life is nigh to leave him  
 His perjury shall grieve him.”

“Oh mother, mother gone is gone!  
 The lost is lost forever!  
 Death, death is now my only boon  
 Would I had, livéd never!  
 Out, out, forever out my light!  
 Depart, depart in gloomy night  
 With God is no compassion.  
 Oh me, my hopeless passion!”

“Help, God not on this child so young  
 Lay hard thy hand of terror.  
 She knows not what escapes her tongue.  
 Oh count it not her error!  
 My child, thy earthly cares resign,  
 And think on God and bliss divine.  
 So shall thy soul victorious  
 Obtain a bridegroom glorious.”

“Oh mother, what is bliss divine?  
 Oh mother, what perdition?  
 With him, with him is bliss divine,  
 Without him all perdition.  
 Out, out, forever out my light!  
 Depart, depart in gloomy night!  
 With God is no compassion.  
 Oh me, my hopeless passion!”



Thus raged despair incessantly,  
 Her burning brain confusing;  
 Thus went she on most impiously  
 God's providence accusing.  
 She wrung her hands and beat upon  
 Her breast till down the sun had gone,  
 Till o'er heavens blue arch glancing  
 The golden stars shot dancing.

And sudden, hark! comes tramp, tramp, tramp.  
 A horse is trotting by her!  
 Down springs the rider with a stamp  
 On the' outer staircase nigh her.  
 And hark again! The door-bells ring,  
 A low and gentle cling, cling, cling!  
 There through the door came clearly  
 These words of one loved dearly,

"Hollo, hollo! arise my dear!  
 Art waking, love, or sleeping?  
 Say, in thy visions was I near?  
 Art laughing now or weeping?  
 Ah William, thou! so late by night!  
 I've watched and wept since morning light.  
 For thee my heart is bleeding,  
 Whence com'st thou hither speeding?"

At midnight hour I saddled steed,  
 Came from Bohemia hither:  
 I mounted charger late indeed  
 To take thee with me thither!"  
 Ah William, stay till night be past.  
 The hawthorn shivers in the blast,  
 Here, love where nought can harm thee  
 In my embraces warm thee.

Then let the hawthorn shivering shrink,  
 My dearest, let it shiver!  
 The charger snorts, the spur doth clink,  
 I may not wait forever.  
 Come, robe thee, spring and mount with speed  
 Behind me on my sable steed.  
 A hundred miles indeed now  
 We to our couch must speed now.



"A hundred miles to night wouldst thou  
 To bridal couch me carry!  
 And hark, the clock is threatening now  
 The eleventh hour — Oh tarry!"  
 "See here, see there! The moon shines bright.  
 We and the dead ride well to-night!  
 This very night, I swear thee,  
 To bridal couch I'll bear thee."

"But where the bed that we must fill?  
 And where the chamber, say, love."  
 Six planks, two shingles, cool and still,  
 And small, and far away, love."  
 "Hast room for me?" to me and thee,  
 Come, robe thee, spring and mount with me!  
 The gate is open standing,  
 The guests wait our commanding."

19 His fair one robed her straight, and sprung  
 Upon the steed behind him,  
 To the dear rider close she clung;  
 Her snowy arms entwined him.  
 And hurry, hurry, skirr, skirr, skirr!  
 Away at headlong speed they spur,  
 Pant horse and rider, dashing  
 Mid sparks and pebbles flashing.

On right and left with wondrous speed  
 The dazzled sight from under  
 - How scudded forest, field and mead!  
 How did the bridges thunder!  
 "Dost fear my love? The moon shines bright.  
 Hurrah! The dead ride well to night  
 Dost fear the dead my dearest?  
 "The dead? Why name them, dearest?"

O'er what doth fly the night-bird high?  
 What dirge and knell come booming?"  
 The death-knell long, the fun'ral song,  
 We are the dead entombing."  
 And nigher came a fun'ral train  
 With bier and coffin o'er the plain.  
 Their chant was like the groaning  
 Of frogs in marshes moaning.



"When midnight's past your dead entomb,  
 With dirge and knell forth speeding;  
 But now I bear my young wife home.  
 Come with' me to the wedding!  
 "Come, sexton, with, thy quire away  
 And croak for me a wedding lay.  
 Come, priest, and give thy blessing  
 Ere we our couch are pressing.

Cease dirge and knell — the bier is gone!  
 Obedient to his calling  
 Swift, swift the train comes, closely on  
 Behind his horse-hoofs falling;  
 And faster faster, skirr, skirr, skirr!  
 Away at whirlwind speed they spur.  
 Pant horse and rider dashing  
 Mid sparks and pebbles flashing.

How fast on right, how fast on left  
 Hill, dale and woodland speeded!  
 How fast on left and right and left  
 Town tower and tree receded!  
 Dost fear my love? the moon shines bright.  
 Hurrah, the dead, ride well to-night!  
 Dost fear the dead, my dearest?"  
 Ah name them not my dearest.

See there! upon the gibbet's height,  
 The wheel of death surrounding,  
 Half visible by pale moonlight  
 An airy rabble bounding.  
 "Hollo ye rabble! hither flee!  
 Ye rabble, come and follow me!  
 Ye must the dance be leading  
 When we to bed are speeding."

And straight the rabble, swoof, swoof, swoof,  
 Came close behing him bustling,  
 As whirlwinds round the hazel bush  
 Sweep through the dry leaves rustling;  
 And ever faster skirr, skirr, skirr!  
 Away at torrent speed they spur.  
 Pant horse and rider, dashing  
 Mid sparks and pebbles flashing.



How flies whate'er the moon o'er shone!  
 How fast 'tis backward driven!  
 How all above has backward flown,  
 The stars and the blue heaven!  
 "Dost fear, my love? the moon shines bright.  
 Hurra! The dead ride well to night.  
 Dost fear the dead, my dearest?"  
 "Why wilt thou name them, dearest?"

"Barb, barb, methinks the cock doth crow;  
 The sand is nigh expended.  
 Barb, barb, I feel the morn air blow.  
 Barb, here our course is ended.  
 Right well, right well, our ride has sped  
 All ready stands the bridal bed.  
 The dead are good at riding!  
 Here, here's our home abiding."

Up to an iron grated door  
 At headlong speed he rushes;  
 One stroke with slender rod, no more,  
 Padlock and bolt back pushes.  
 The jarring gates fly open wide  
 And over graves they onward ride,  
 All round in moonlight beaming  
 The grave stars white were gleaming.

And lo! with startling suddenness,  
 Ah me, a grousome wonder!  
 The rider's garments peice by peice,  
 Fall mouldering asunder.  
 His head becomes a skull all bare  
 Of hair or flesh, his body fair  
 A skeleton unfolding  
 The scythe and hour glass holding.

High rears the steed, snorts fearfully,  
 The sparks around him darting,  
 And sinks beneath her suddenly,  
 Swift through the earth departing.  
 And howls on howls through high air sound,  
 And moonings deep from under ground.  
 Leonora's heart is rending,  
 'Twixt life and death contending.



Now swiftly sport by moonlight's glance  
 A band of phantoms scowling,  
 All round about in curling dance  
 These words in concert howling,  
 "Be patient! If thy heart must break  
 Blame not what God in heaven spake.  
 Thy life — this hour must end it.  
 Thy soul — May God befriend it!"

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## SCHILLER'S DIVISION OF THE EARTH.

Literally translated.

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"TAKE ye the world" spake Jove from high Olympus  
 To men below, "I give it freely: take!  
 It shall be yours forever to inherit;  
 Like brothers the division make."

Then hastened all mankind to take possession,  
 And quickly young and old their claims made good.  
 The farmer seized the first fruits of the harvest  
 The squire rode gaily through the wood.

The merchant took what filled his warehouses  
 The abbot chose the jovial old Rhine wine  
 The King stopped up the highways and the bridges  
 And said "the tenth of all is mine."

At length arrived, long after the division  
 The tardy poet; from afar came he.  
 But everything alas! had now its master.  
 There was for him no vacancy.

"Ah me! and shall I only of all others  
 Forgotten be? What, I, thy truest son!"  
 So poured he forth the voice of his complaining  
 And flung himself before Jove's throne.



"If thou amid the land of dreams didst wander"

Replied the God, "then quarel not with me.

Where wast thou pray, when man the world divided?"

"I was" exclaimed the bard "with thee.

Mine eye was on thy radiant countenance hanging.

Upon thy heaven's harmony mine ear.

Forgive the spirit which in thee entranced

And all forgot the earthly sphere."

"Alas!" quoth Jove "the world away is given.

Field, wood, and town no more belong to me.

Whilt thou then come and dwell with me in heaven?

It shall be ever open unto thee."

## THE MAIDEN'S LAMENT.

Literally translated from Schiller.

THE oak-wood murmurs,

The clouds swam high,

The maiden sitteth

The green shore by;

The billows are breaking in might, in might,

And she sigheth out to the darksome night,

Her fair eye the gushing tear staineth.

"The heart is perished,

The world is waste,

And gives nought longer

Of joy to taste.

Thou Holy One, summon thy child back to thee!

Enough of this world and its fortune for me.

I have lived and have loved — what remaineth?"

"Thy tears that are flowing

All fruitlessly pour

Thy weeping can waken

The dead never more.



Then seek for what comforts and soothes the sad heart  
 When the pleasures of Love like a vision depart.  
 I, the Holy one will not deny thee."

"Then let my tears flowing  
 All fruitlessly pour,  
 Let weeping not waken  
 The dead ever more!  
 The sweetest relief for the sorrowing heart  
 When Love's fairy joys like a vision depart  
 It's tears and laments will supply me."

New Haven, 1840.

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## ANCÆUS.

FROM THE GERMAN.

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"ANCÆUS reigned in Ionia. \* \* \* He was told by one of his servants, whom he pressed with hard labor in his vineyard, that he would never taste the produce of his vines. He had already the cup in hand, and called the prophet to convince him of his falsehood, when the slave, yet firm in his conviction, uttered the well-known proverb —

*'Multa cadunt inter calicem supremaque labra.'*

"Twixt cup and lip there's many a slip."

And at that very moment Ancæus was told that a wild boar had entered his vineyard; upon which he threw down the cup and hastened to drive away the wild beast. He perished in the attempt."

---

THE Monarch of Samos (Ancæus his name),  
 His vineyard with pleasure surveyed  
 His vines he was carefully planting; up came  
 An old slave and solemnly said.

"Oh stay, King Ancæus, thy sedulous hand!  
 Hie home to thy palace and rest!  
 The juice of the vineyard which now thou hast planned  
 Shall ne'er for thy goblet be pressed!"



The monarch looked on him and smiled in disdain,  
 And thus to the old man said he:  
 "Thy task shall it be, when the goblet I drain,  
 To fill it, thou dotard, for me."

"Trust not Fortune, aye beguiling;  
 Trust not Hope, for Hope is vain.  
 Now is Fortune on thee smiling?  
 She may quickly change again.  
 'Twixt the vine and press, I ween,  
 Storm and frost may intervene."

The vines have up-sprouted so spreading and high;  
 The leaves are fresh-blowing and green;  
 The grapes in rich clusters all under them lie,  
 Or peep out the foliage between.

And as the glad monarch the gathering viewed, -  
 He saw that the old man was near,  
 And hailed him, exulting — "The vintage is good;  
 Are goblet and cup-bearer here?"

Then answered in sorrow that servitor gray,  
 "Yes, fair is this vintage of thine;  
 Yet hast thou, thy sedulous toil to repay,  
 Not tasted one drop of the wine.

"Trust not Fortune, aye beguiling;  
 Trust not Hope, for Hope is vain.  
 Now is Fortune on thee smiling?  
 She may quickly change again.  
 'Twixt the press and cup, alas!  
 Time enough has yet to pass."

The feast is made ready — fair sight to behold;  
 The slave in sad silence is there:  
 He bears to the monarch the goblet of gold,  
 But shudders that goblet to bear.

Then out spoke the monarch in merriest mood —  
 "All hail to thee, prophet of ill!  
 My labors have brought me a recompense good;  
 Say, why art thou shuddering still?"



Then answered in sorrow that servitor gray,  
 While tears in his aged eyes shine —  
 "I bear to my sovereign the goblet to-day —  
*He hath not yet drunk of the wine !*

"Trust not Fortune, aye beguiling;  
 Trust not Hope, for Hope is vain.  
 Now is Fortune on thee smiling?  
 She may quickly change again.  
*'Twixt the goblet and the lip  
 Often times the hand will slip !'*

The King laid his hand on the goblet of gold,  
 And smiling he raised it on high;  
 That instant the gates of the palace unfold,  
 And the vintners in terror draw nigh:

*I wasting* "Oh haste thee, great monarch! a boar from the wood  
~~Deth-savage~~ thy vineyard so fair;  
 The best of thy hunters are laid in their blood —  
 The wild beast hath slaughtered them there!"

Up started the monarch, and, weapon in hold,  
 He furiously rushed through the door;  
 His lips were ne'er wet in the goblet of gold —  
 He came from the vineyard no more!

Trust not Fortune, aye beguiling;  
 Trust not Hope, for Hope is vain.  
 Now is Fortune on thee smiling?  
 She may quickly change again.  
 Ere another moment flies,  
 Falls the lightning from the skies,  
 New-Haven, June 15, 1840.

---

### 'HEUS SUSANNA' .

Knickerbocker, March 1849.

---

'PASSIBUS haud pigris Alabamæ prata relinquo;  
 In gēnubus porto barbiton ipse meam:  
 Ludovicique peto gaudent quæ nomine terras:  
 Delicias venio rursus ut aspiciam.



Nocte pluit tota, hos fines quo tempore ventum est,  
 At nebulas prorsus pellit aprica dies;  
 Frigore me feriunt haud æqui spicula Solis.  
 Ne lacrymam ob casum, funde, SUSANNA, meum,  
 Casus, cara, meus ne sit tibi causa doloris:  
 Nam cithara huc domino venit amata suo.  
 Conscondo fulmen; rapior mox amne secundo;  
 In nosmet læsi numinis ira cadit.  
 Innumeros subitæ rapuerunt fulgura flammæ,  
 Et nigros homines mors nigrior perimit.  
 Machina dirupta est, sonipes volat inde caballus,  
 Acturusque animam (crede) mihi videor.  
 Quam retinere volens mea demum lumina clausi.  
 Ne lacrymam ob casum, funde, SUSANNA, meum!  
 Sopitum nuper dulcis me lusit imago;  
 (Nec vox per noctem, nec sonus ullus erat)  
 Obvia præcipiti decursu colle secundo  
 Visa est ante oculos nostra SUSANNA vehi.  
 Gutta vagabundæ turbato stabat oculo,  
 Pendebat labris ægipyri popanum;  
 Ecce, aio, properamus et Austri linquimus arva  
 Ne lacrymam ob casum, funde, SUSANNA, meum!  
 Aurelios mox inde Novos Austrumque revisam,  
 Undique delicias quærere nempe meas.  
 Quam si non possim contingere lumine claro,  
 Huicce nigro infausto nil nisi fata manet;  
 Et quando in placida constratus morte quiescam  
 Ne lacrymam ob casum funde, SUSANNA, meum!  
 Casus, cara, meus ne sit tibi causa doloris!  
 Huc veniens, mecum barbiton, ecce! fero.

---







## ERRATA.

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Page 10, line 14, for "one" read "our".

- " 11, line 18, for "dessed" read "dissolved"; line 28 for "declaiming" read "declaring".
  - " 17, *note*, for "spree" read "sprees".
  - " 23, line 5, for "free-toil" read "free-soil".
  - " 29, line 3 for "my" read "may"; line 14 for "careth" read "careth".
  - " 63, 7 lines from foot, for "Picket" read "Pichat"; 6 lines from foot for "*Horse Journal*" read "*Home Journal*"; *note*, for "for othen" read "forgotten"; for "evening" read "enemies".
  - " 64, 13 lines from foot, for "lead" read "head".
  - " 69, *note*, for "M" read "Wm".
  - " 72, line 11, for "nith" read "with".
  - " 75, 7 lines from foot, for "The Sparks" read "Fire-Sparks"; for "moonings" read "moanings".
  - " 76, line 3, for "curling" read "circling".
  - " 77, line 8, for "And" read "Had"; for "Whilt" read "Wilt"; line 16 for "swam" read "swarm".
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Vol. III., containing Essays and Sketches will be published in the course of the season.

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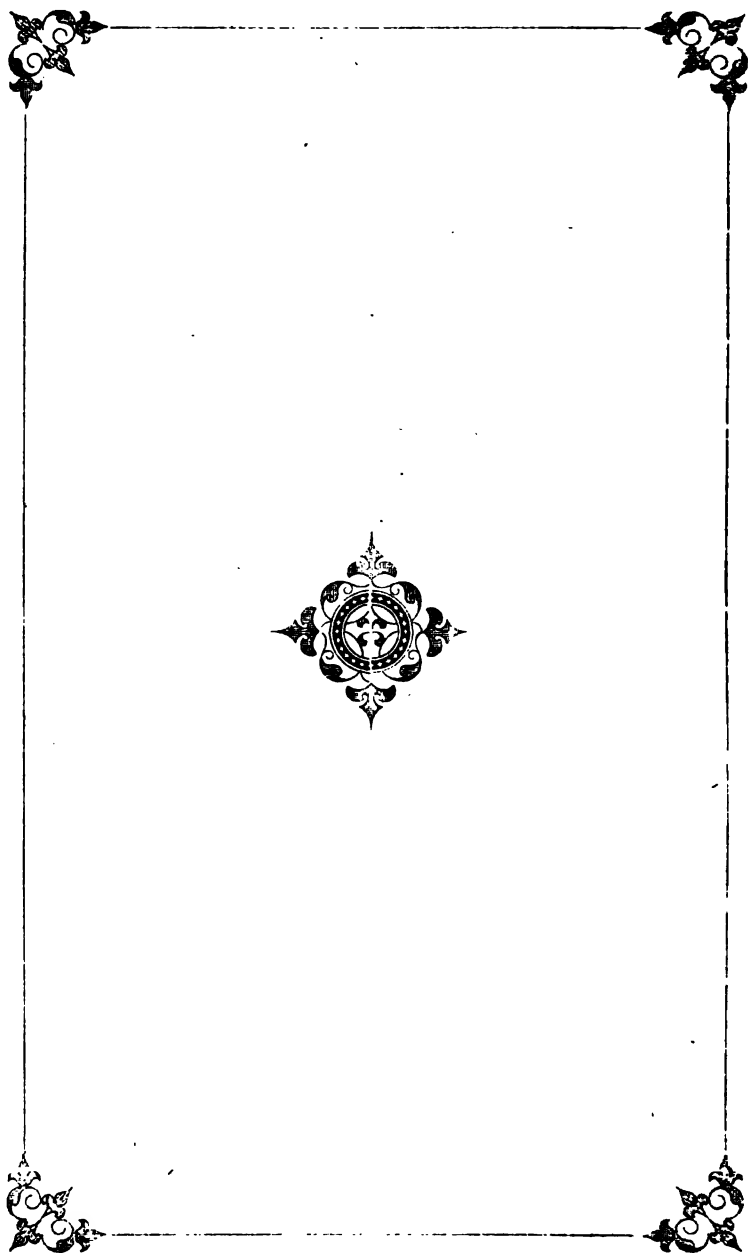














1912.



**PIECES**  
OF A  
**BROKEN-DOWN CRITIC.**  
PICKED UP BY HIMSELF.

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**Vol. III. SKETCHES, ESSAYS AND PARAGRAPHS.**

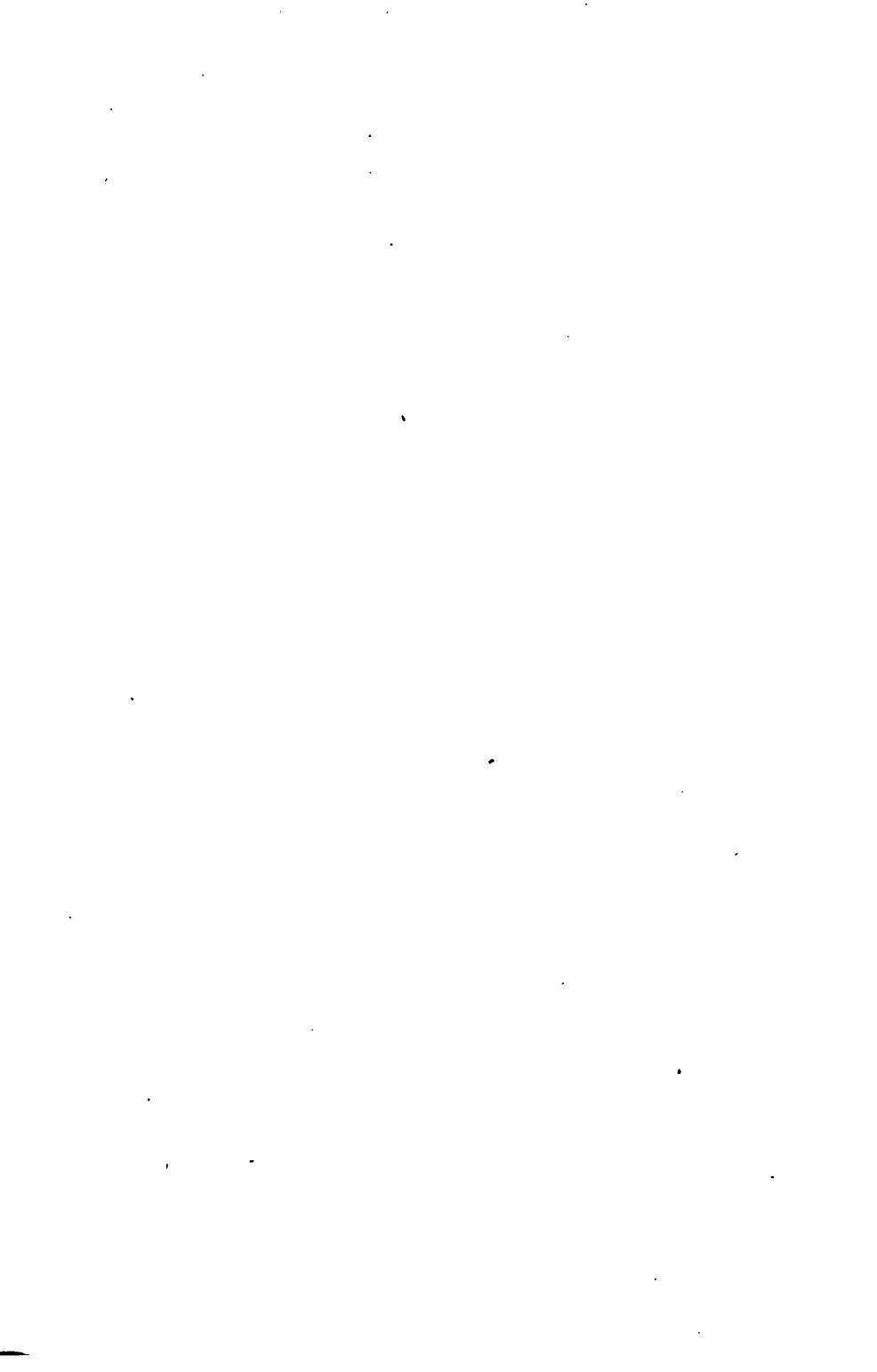
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**BADEN-BADEN.**

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**Vol. III.**

**SKETCHES, ESSAYS AND PARAGRAPHS.**

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• **BADEN-BADEN.**

**PRINTED BY SCOTZNIOVSKY.**

• **1859.**

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1873, May 26.

Gift of  
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## ENVY AND SCANDAL.

Knickerbocker, June 1849.

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IT is customary for us to boast of our virtue as a nation. If there is one thing more than any other which an American believes, and has been taught to believe from his youth, and is ready to maintain on all occasions, it is that he belongs to a particularly virtuous and moral community. And the reports given of other countries by that rapidly-increasing class of our countrymen who travel abroad, tend very strongly to confirm this impression. Interrogate a travelled American on this point, and he will be likely to answer (supposing him to be a man of pretensions to character and morals) after this guise: 'Can there be a doubt of our superiority? Compare our practices with those of Europeans. In Paris a young man speaks of his mistress as openly as he would of his horse; he would laugh at the idea of its being necessary or desirable to disguise the connection. In England parsons drink their bottle or bottles of wine after dinner, and poor men are starving by thousands, while lords enjoy incomes larger than what we consider the principal of a large fortune. In Italy—' And so on; every country supplies him with unfavorable points of contrast to our own.

Now it certainly is but just to admit, that after every qualification, and exception, and drawback, and caveat, which a candid and well-informed man would feel obliged to make, these pretensions are perfectly correct, so far as they go. Our men are decidedly more chaste than the Europeans, and the general tone of our society is in this respect purer. And in temperance, to use the word in its popularly limited and technical sense — I was on the point of saying in its slang sense — we stand far before several nations of the old world. Our superiority in both these respects may be correctly attributed to those Puritan sentiments, from the influence of which not even those of our states which were settled by the Cavaliers



are altogether exempt. And it is also certain that there is among us a more general sympathy between different classes of society, which prompts the undertaking and promotes the carrying out of schemes of general benevolence to a greater extent than is customary elsewhere. And this merit is the direct result of what we conveniently sum up in the phrase, 'our democratic institutions.'

But readily granting and gladly accepting all this, it remains to be considered how far the influence commonly thence drawn is sustainable. It remains to be inquired, if the whole moral law is included in abstinence from sensual sins and exemption from the pride and selfishness of class feeling. And though the pursuit of this inquiry may subject us with the unthinking to the charge of unpatriotic feeling, it is in truth a most patriotic investigation, because it is one likely to be beneficial. The profit of haranguing people against a sin to which they are *not* given, is exceedingly problematical. At best it is a mis-spending of time, since every audience has sins enough to which it is prone, and in the condemnation of which the preacher or moralist may find ample employment. But, moreover, it is particularly apt to create self-righteousness, and lead people to

'Compound for sins they are inclined to,

By damning those they have no mind to.'

To declaim, for instance, upon the errors of Popery before a congregation of rigid Presbyterians, or 'Evangelical' Episcopalians, amounts to just nothing; there being no rational probability that any members of such an auditory will ever go to Purgatory or pray to relics. The man who makes a profitable use of the theme is one who, like Whately, points out how these errors have their origin in human nature, and to what similar or corresponding errors Protestants are liable. And a 'tee-total' lecture to a meeting-house-full of New-England women and boys, most of whom never see the outside of a bottle of wine from one year's end to the other, is very much a work of supererogation. And generally, people are more apt to be pleased than profited by homilies on the faults of their neighbors. Let us then not shrink from the examination through any such erroneous views of the requisitions of patriotism.

Our democratic polity, as we said, has introduced a



very general spirit of sympathy between classes, and consequently of pecuniary benevolence, contrasting favorably with the exclusive constitution of many European societies. But as this peculiar good is the direct result of democracy, so does there also directly and peculiarly result from democracy a mighty evil — a prevailing sentiment of envy directed against individuals in any way distinguished. The leading idea of democracy being that 'all men are equal', or as St. Tammany used to express the principle, 'one man's as good as another', whoever is better than others; whoever rises above the mass by his talents or wealth, or any other distinction; above all, whoever is distinguished from them by his principles and conduct, becomes popularly condemned of *invidia*, and is assailed by envious and malignant detraction and persecution. Hence is it that our greatest statesmen of all parties are found occupying subordinate positions in the state, and repeatedly see inferior men put over their heads into the highest offices. Hence too, that wealthy and fashionable men are constantly slandered and vilified. Some of our most widely-circulated newspapers make it a great part of their business to represent the 'Upper Ten' as one sink of profligacy and dishonesty. We are inclined sometimes to indignation, and sometimes to laughter, on observing the *dispensing* power of rank and wealth in England, which frequently allows a *respectable* man — i. e., one of property or title — to do things which, if done by a poor individual, would meet with prompt punishment. But meanwhile we ought not to overlook that opposite extreme here which renders the possession of property, liberal education, and fashionable connections, a thing to reproach a man with, and a certain weapon against him, if he is brought before the public in any other than a purely literary light. And if our literary men *pur sang* escape comparatively unscathed, it must be attributed to a lucky accident. The want of something to admire (so common a want among a new people) having no rank, and comparatively little wealth to gratify itself upon, has fixed upon literary reputation or rather literary notoriety, and hence our national predilection to toady indiscriminately all literary lions, great or small, native or foreign.

So too the Puritan spirit, while it has induced a very meritorious state of society in some respects, has



also given birth to a very great evil, if not peculiarly, at least to a peculiar degree its own. The Puritan spirit, rigidly proper itself, is exacting and censorious in its demands from others, parading a virtue strongly hostile to the future existence of cakes and ale. While abstaining, moreover, from many popular amusements and topics of conversation, it is also (would it be too much to say *therefore?*) disposed to indemnify itself by a free discussion of character and conduct.

Now when to these influences is joined the national spirit of curiosity, a spirit from which no one class among us can be said to be more free than another, the consequence is, *a state of gossip unrivalled in any large community*, the peculiar feature of which is that the *men* are as great gossips here as the women are in the most gossippy of other countries. Those of us who have habitually lived in the atmosphere, though sometimes too immediately made aware of its pernicious effects, yet do not ordinarily, when not actually suffering from it ourselves, estimate its full virulence. It is only those who have been some time absent from the country on whom at their return a full appreciation of this general meddlingness is forced. Let a young man be abroad for several years, corresponding rarely with home, and seldom, if ever, seeing the face of an American; then let him return and ask after his old acquaintances and schoolmates. The budget of scandal he hears will fairly frighten him. If he be a stout politician and opposed to the party in power, this general deterioration of men is put down to the account of Mr. Polk or Mr. Tyler. But when he comes to ascertain for himself, in course of time, how little truth there is in all the sad stories he has heard, he will feel that a habit of detraction is one of our national sins, and will probably not be without some twinges of conscience for his own share in it at some period of his life.

Verily they manage these things better in Europe. In England gossip is the proverbial property of old maids. The first duty of an English gentleman is *to mind his own business*. This taciturnity of the Englishman is attributed, by people who cannot understand it, to selfishness, or want of interest in others; whereas it proceeds from an excellent motive — a desire to avoid intermeddling



in the affairs of others, or injuring them by rashly circulating false or mischievous reports. The French are not so discreet. A Gaul's vanity is such that it often runs ahead of his honor, and he will talk scandal of a woman to give himself consequence in the eyes of those around. Yet even a Frenchman does not gossip scandal for the mere sake of gossiping, and the low standard of Parisian morality has at least this one mitigation, that it renders fewer things scandalous and calumniable. And what makes our system of gossip less excusable is, that it has not the temptation of *professional idleness* elsewhere existing. Our women, who have something to do in their households, manufacture more tittle-tattle than the Parisian fashionables, who give up their very children to the care of hirelings. There is more scandal talked in the three or four clubs of New-York than in all those of London put together, though the former are chiefly composed of business men (nominally, at least,) while men of independent fortune compose no small fraction of the latter. Nor are our other cities, from Savannah to Boston, a whit less faulty than New-York in this matter, but, if any thing, rather worse.

'How very stupid and prosy you are growing!' says a goodnatured friend, who has license to look over my shoulder.

That reminds me of a remark I heard a wicked wit make the other day, 'that good people were always stupid.' Pity't is so, (I don't mean that good people are, but that this essay is) for I never wanted more to write interestingly. Were I a parson I would preach a sermon on the ninth commandment that should stir up my hearers a little, I promise you. As it is, I can but write this — very stupid you call it — undeniably running somewhat off into general declamation, a thing very unprofitable. Let me therefore try to illustrate my meaning by some particular instances.

Let us begin with the most innocent, one which involves no positive malice, and which many will be disposed to smile at the idea of mentioning as wrong. It is an ordinary occurrence for 'the world;' that convenient personage whom the Gauls call *on* and the Teutons *man*; to announce that two young people are 'engaged,' the parties most nearly interested having no knowledge



of the imputed relation between them. Hundreds of passably good folks have no hesitation of repeating such a report on the merest hearsay, or starting it on the vaguest evidence. Well, what harm does it do? Let us see. In course of time, before very long course of time, the young people hear of the happiness allotted to them by the benevolent public of their acquaintance. We will, in violation of the ordinary rules of gallantry, take the gentleman first. How is he affected? If a conceited young man, or disposed to be conceited, it puts him immediately on the very best terms with himself. Of course he sees through it all. The young lady would be glad enough to have him, no doubt. Most likely her friends have got up the report. But he is n't going to 'throw himself away without sufficient cause' in the flower of his days. Not he indeed. And so, though perhaps the damsel herself would n't take him at any price, he is fully confirmed in the delusion of his own great value, and becomes fuller than ever of himself. Or suppose him to be a modest youth; a rare animal, of which however some specimens remain to the present day. Then the intelligence comes upon him like a thunder-clap. He may be brave enough, and yet find himself not a little frightened. Henceforth he feels hopelessly awkward when thrown into his imputed betrothed's society, and is compelled in very self-defence to avoid it; unless he is a very romantic and high-minded juvenile, and then he may say to himself, 'The world has put Miss — 's name and mine together. I am bound to propose to her;' and propose he does, and perhaps he is accepted, and marries her, so to speak, without meaning to. Here then on the one hand you have a pleasant acquaintance, which might have ripened into a happy marriage, broken off; and on the other, a match brought about which can hardly fail to be an unhappy one, founded as it is neither in love nor reason, but in a mistaken sentiment of honor. While the eligible young men who think well of themselves are driven to ludicrous extremities to avoid the fair-ones whom they suppose to be lying in wait for them. I have known some absent themselves from all parties and ladies' society for a whole season, and others put themselves under the protection of some most unfashionable and anti-ladies' man; a very male Duenna, as it were.



Of the lady's feelings little shall be said, for ladies' feelings are sacred subjects. Try to imagine them yourself, reader; how awkward they must be if she does not care for the young man, how more than awkward if she does. But putting aside all such hypothetical sentimentalities as feelings, I have known serious practical inconveniences result from such gossip. I once asked a clever Bostonian why she had given up her equestrian exercise, of which I knew her to be very fond.

'Because,' she replied, 'if I was seen riding twice with the same gentleman, people would say I was engaged to him, and I am not belle enough to command a different cavalier every time I go out; so I have stopped riding altogether.'

Here then is a matter of pure gossip, not involving malice or envy, and yet see how much annoyance, to use the mildest term, it may and does produce. Let us now go a step farther, and take an instance where malice generally does enter into the original motive of the report; the assertion or insinuation of a married woman's flirtation.

*Flirtation* is a pleasant euphuism, and many persons use it very much at random without appearing to attach any serious meaning to it. But what *does* it mean when applied to a married woman? Simply this that she is in danger of committing a heinous crime and is on the verge of ruin, and likely to ruin not only her own reputation but the peace of two families. *That's all*. An accusation sufficiently serious, one would think, to demand unmistakable grounds before making it. But on what sort of grounds do we hear such a charge made every day? Why that Mr. Smith has been seen occasionally in Mrs. Brown's opera-box, or that living within ten doors of each other, they have been once or twice observed walking together, by some self-constituted street-inspector, or that Smith has been heard to praise Mrs. Brown for her beauty, or she him for his intelligence, or that he is often at the Browns', Brown having been his fellow-collegian and travelling-companion for years. There are some propositions which it does not require an astonishing amount of penetration or charity to admit, for instance that a real friend will naturally be more civil to his friend's wife than to Mrs. Anybody, and that a man



may admire a woman's beauty or wit and be fond of her society without plotting against her husband's honor. But honest, straightforward, natural conduct, is the last solution for his imagined mysteries that ever occurs to your habitual gossip. It is so much more interesting to make a secret and an intrigue out of every thing and put a wrong construction on the most innocent actions.

It must be owned, however, that there are many well-meaning persons, quite free from malice, who honestly believe it an impropriety for a married woman to be seen in public with any one but a relative. This is the fault of an erroneous popular opinion respecting the position and duties of married women. When Willis said of a Bowery beauty, that 'after she is married, she is thought no more of than a pair of shoes after they are sold,' he might have extended his remark considerably beyond the Bowery. This notion seems to be based on the conventional fiction (which was true in an earlier stage of American society, when every matron was her own 'help,') that a married lady must have all her time occupied by household duties and the education of her children. This state of things we have, in a measure at least, outgrown, and beside it is not the lot of every woman to be blessed (?) with a large family. But owing to these deeply-rooted conventional ideas, most ladies on ceasing to be what is technically called 'young ladies,' desert their proper station in society, and are apt to be bored in consequence. They become dawdling and fussy under the supposition that they really are doing something in-doors; or they read stupid novels or frequent equally stupid lectures;\* or they manufacture this infernal gossip

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\* I WISH somebody able to do the topic justice could be persuaded to enlighten the public on this lecturing system of ours, and show how absurd and hollow and every way wasteful it is, and how instead of increasing knowledge and promoting intellectual discipline, it has a direct tendency to diminish the one and retard the other. The idea of any educated creature going to a lecture for *amusement* is amusing enough. Any lecture worth any thing as a lecture requires an exertion of the intellect to hear it profitably, as much exertion as to hear a sermon perhaps. But the female mind requires to be diverted with the sight of crowds, and therefore for those who have scruples of conscience against balls and operas, lectures on any thing from an agreeable alternation with Ethiopian Melodists and *Lusus Naturæ*. For my own part, I confess to a strong predilection for the



that does so much mischief. There are clever women enough to break up the system. I sometimes wonder some of them do not in desperation throw themselves into the breach, and run quite wild for a time, smoke and drink grog like the Parisian *lionnes*, gallop out alone à la Fanny Kemble, and play the original Fourierite generally.

Making allowance for all this, much of the scandal I have mentioned is directly chargeable on the spirit of envy. For, as the working of this spirit, so fostered by the democratic principle, makes the community at large hostile to the quasi-aristocracy, which is distinguished for wealth and certain sorts of knowledge, so does it make the quasi-aristocracy hostile to those among themselves who are distinguished for wit or other attractions. And married belles are more envied and hated and calumniated than single ones just in proportion as there are fewer of them.

Now comes a third kind of scandal, which I think more strikingly national than either of the preceding, the gossip of men, especially young men, about one another. This is carried on to such an extent, that it may fairly be called one of our national vices. We are ready enough to laugh at the young Englishmen whom we sometimes see here, their awkward dress and more awkward manners, their potatory propensities, and rusticity in many things; but there is one point in which it were well if we could or would imitate them; *they have not a habit of talking ill of each other*. It is positively frightful to hear how our young men will speak of their friends — yes, actually their friends — men toward whom they entertain none but good feelings; but the love of gossip is stronger than the considerations of friendship. On what grounds, for instance, or what *no* grounds, will a young man get the reputation of being dissipated. Jones sees Brown at the club some cold winter night with a glass of brandy and water before him. Perhaps Brown may

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opera on the mere score of morality; there is infinitely less hypocrisy about it at any rate. A tolerably large number of those who go there to enjoy the music, and do enjoy it, and carry away pleasing recollections of it, but did you ever know man or woman who went to a popular lecture (save an occasional newspaper reporter) that could tell you any thing about it afterward except *who was there*?



not be in the same position for the next year. Perhaps he had been walking two miles in the frost, and had to walk two more. But he is not to have the benefit of any of the extenuating circumstances. Next day Jones tells Robinson that he sees Brown drinking o' nights at the club. Robinson tells Thompson that Brown is getting to be a hard fellow; and so the story grows on its travels, till Brown's Presbyterian mother and sisters in the country hear that the unfortunate youth tipples in all the bar-rooms of the city, and is carried up to bed three nights out of six. Or again, how easily and how falsely is the report started about any man that he is living beyond his means! Here we see another exhibition of the democratic spirit of envy, which delights in seeing a rich man ruined; and if it cannot be thus gratified, takes some satisfaction in saying that he is going to be ruined.

This is another case in which it is curious to mark the difference between our opinions and those of the English. In England, when a man lives well and spends money, he is usually supposed to have money; whence it arises that an impostor with a little ready cash and a large stock of assurance, often victimizes English tradesmen in a way that makes their gullibility almost incredible to us. Here, on the contrary, when a man lives freely, the general inference is that he has *not* the means sufficient to support his style, and is going to 'blow up' before long. To be sure there is some foundation in actual occurrences for the different views entertained in the two countries. If our people are sharp in making money, the trans-Atlantic Anglo-Saxons are more prudent in keeping it. You do n't often hear of an English banking-house breaking from speculations in flour and cotton, and every thing but their regular business; nor does an Englishman ever put half his fortune into his house, so as to find himself, at the end of four or five years, with a splendid mansion and nothing to keep it up with. If some of our parvenus have thus erred, their errors have been bitterly visited on the whole class of people who inhabit fine houses. With a ludicrous inconsistency, also, the amount of private fortunes is absurdly magnified by popular report, so that a man will be said at the same time to be worth three times as much as he really is, *and* to be on the high-road to ruin.



We can best estimate the power of gossip by observing the contrivances resorted to to propitiate and avoid it. A young lawyer who has let his moustache grow on the continent, sacrifices this ornamental appendage to his countenance immediately on his return, lest it should be taken for an indication of expensive and unbusiness-like habits. A gentleman who keeps horses will be careful not to boast of the number of his stud and the prices he has paid for them, as an Englishman would: he rather seeks to conceal both. I shall never forget the distress and confusion of a young merchant who lived in the upper part of our island, and occasionally sported a handsome gray tandem on the road. One day his Irish groom was ordered to wait for him about a mile out of town; but Pat, having his full share of that dunderheadedness from which the 'finest pisantry' are not *quite* exempt, tooled the equipage straight down to the store in Pine-street. Out came a crowd of the curious to criticize the unusual spectacle, and out came the unlucky owner, shaking in his boots, and dreading he hardly knew what. Fortunately he retained presence of mind enough to give 'at an emphatic slanging and order him to take off the leader and ride him home; by which prompt measure my friend saved his credit and character. This happened several years ago, by the way. We Gothamites are getting a little wiser now, and I do not despair of seeing the time here when a man may spend his money as he pleases, provided he makes no criminal use of it, without incurring the suspicion of being *κακόνομος τῷ δήμῳ*, or intending to break in a month. They are not so far advanced in Boston, judging at least from what their organ, the *Modern Athenian Blunderbuss*, says.

'Why who in New-York ever reads the Blunderbuss?' My dear fellow, it is not right altogether to despise any thing, not even the 'Blunderbuss.' After I have finished all the other magazines I usually take a dip into it, and occasionally pick up a piece of valuable information, such as the one I was going to call your attention to. You know how much money is given to literary and charitable institutions by the good people of Massachusetts, which we hear of, not from themselves — oh dear no! — but from the concurrent testimony of an admiring universe. Well, the 'Blunderbuss' has let the cat out of the bag.



A late writer therein says that the public sentiment of Boston does n't allow a man to drive four-in-hand, or put his servants into livery, (or build an elegant house, I suppose;) and so, when a Bostonian has made a fortune, he absolutely does n't know how to spend the income of it, and the only way in which he can cut a dash with it is to give a handsome slice to a school or hospital, and so get his name into the papers. If one of us had said such a thing! — *said?* if you or I had only hinted the possibility of such a motive — what a tempest would have come down upon us! How the Mrs. Harris of the 'Modern Athenians' would have emptied the teapot of her indignation upon our devoted heads! But it is one of themselves that says it — or rather some of themselves, for the 'Blunderbuss' must count for more than one — so let us only be thankful that we are for once, by their own confession, a little wiser than our Athenian neighbors, though we have still enough to learn.

But the 'Blunderbuss' has led us into a little digression. To come back to our theme. Thus far I have been talking only of the circulation of things false; false stories invented, or false inferences drawn from admitted facts. I am now going farther — to a length that will surprise some people. I say that a story may be perfectly true, to your certain knowledge, and yet you have no right to repeat it. It has been a great mark for ridicule, and a fine field for declamation, that old English law maxim, 'The greater the truth, the greater the libel;' but it is not so entirely absurd, after all, when you come to examine it in all its bearings; and the unwritten rule of English society I would put down for our example in its broadest terms, thus:

You have no right to repeat any thing that comes to your knowledge disadvantageous to a man's private character, unless you are compelled to do so in self-defence.

There is nothing here said of your duty as a Christian; that may possibly require a little more; but only of your duty as a gentleman and a member of society. Here it is that the Puritan spirit manifests itself mischievously. You have seen a man in questionable company, or heard him swear, or suspected him of being the worse for liquor, and you deem it your duty to publish the matter



on the house-tops, by way of showing your abhorrence for such sins; whereas your responsibility is in truth limited by your own example and that of those over whom you have power and influence. If then you are sufficiently intimate with the party to speak yourself *to himself* about it, do so; but you are not likely to good by speaking of it to any one else, and are very sure to do harm.

I have said my say pretty much, and now methinks I hear some grave person exclaiming with asperity, 'And so, Sir, you consider talking about sin as bad as sin itself. You put gossip on a level with profligacy.' My dear Sir, or Madam, I do not think any better of dissipation than you do; but I think worse of scandal. I do not palliate the one: I condemn the other. It is not easy, or pleasant, or profitable, if it be possible, to weigh the comparative heinousness or veniality of sins in themselves, but we can calculate the harm they do to others, and you can see as well as I, that while the evil produced by an act of debauchery or extravagance is frequently, if not generally, temporary and limited in its effects, ten words of scandal may set half-a-dozen people by the ears together for life, and their children after them for three generations. You, Sir, have never had any wild oats to sow. Therefore you have great cause to be thankful. But don't suppose that your correct life gives you a license to talk ill of others. That was just the mistake of the Pharisee of old. No one, not even the clergyman, or that mighty man of men, the daily editor, has a right to appoint himself *custos morum*; and if you make a practice of repeating unfavorable stories, *true or false*, your practice is a very ungentlemanly and unmanly one. You, Madam, are an unimpeachable wife and a devoted mother; regular at church, and charitable to the poor. For this you are worthy of much praise; but if, with all this, you delight in pulling to pieces your neighbors' reputations, and spreading scandalous reports, *you are a great sinner*, and your parson will tell you so if he does his duty. *Apropos* of parsons, I once heard a conversation between two, which will serve me for a fitting conclusion. A young clergyman, who found his position among his flock not very comfortable, had called on an old one for instruction and assistance. The senior did not send me away, either because I was too



young to require this, or because he thought me old enough to share in the profit of his counsel.

'Put cotton in your ears, Brother K.,' said he 'so that you can't hear any stories.' The junior bowed.

'Put cotton in your mouth, so that you can't tell any stories.'

## THE PERIODICAL LITERATURE OF AMERICA.

Blackwood, January 1848.

BRITISH readers are not unacquainted with the American newspaper press, as, not to mention the numerous extracts from transatlantic papers in the columns of London journals, the merits of that press formed, but a few years ago, a topic of controversy between two London Quarterlies. But of American magazines and reviews they seldom hear anything. This is certainly in no degree owing to the scarcity of these publications, for they are as numerous, in comparison, as the newspapers, have a very respectable circulation (in some cases nearly forty thousand), and that at the not remarkably low price of four or five dollars *per annum*. Neither is it to their insignificance at home, for their editors make a considerable figure in the literary world, and their contributors are sufficiently vain of themselves, as their practice of signing or heading articles with their names in full would alone show.\* Indeed Willis' idea (so ridiculed by the *Edinburgh*) of a magazine writer becoming a great lion in society, is not so very great an absurdity if applied to American society. Nor is this due to the fact that their topics are exclusively local; for there is scarcely a subject under heaven of which they do not treat, and a European might derive some very startling

\* One of the superficial peculiarities of American magazines is that the names of *all* the contributors are generally paraded conspicuously on the cover, very few seeking even the disguise of a pseudonym. The number of "most remarkable" men and women who thus display themselves in print is really surprising.



information from them. The *Democratic Review*, for example, has a habit of predicting twice or thrice a year that England is on the point of exploding utterly, and going off into absolute chaos.

"Perhaps," interrupts an impatient non-admirer of things American generally, "it is because they are not worth hearing anything about." And this suggestion is not so far from truth as it is from politeness. Considering the great demand for periodical literature in the New-World, one is surprised to find it so bad in point of quality. Not that the monthly and quarterly press is disfigured by the violence and exaggeration that too often deform the daily. Over-spiciness is the very last fault justly chargeable upon it. In slang language, it would rather be characterized by the terms "slow," "seedy," "remarkably mild," and the like. Crude essays filled with commonplaces, truisms, verses of the true *non Di non homines* cast, tales such as shopboys and milliners' girls delight in, and "critical notices," all conceived in the same spirit of indiscriminating praise, make up the columns of the monthlies; while the one or two more pretending publications which now represent the quarterly press, are a uniformly subdued and soporific character.

Now the first phenomenon worthy of notice is, that this has not always been the case. It was very different eight or nine years ago. The three leading cities of the north, New-York, Boston, and Philadelphia, had each its Quarterly: the *Knickerbocker*, a New-York magazine, boasted a brilliant list of contributors, headed by Irving and Cooper, and its articles were frequently copied (sometimes without acknowledgment) into English periodicals. This change for the worse is worth investigating, at least as a matter of curiosity.

"I don't know that it is a change for the worse," says a prim personage in spectacles. "If your periodical literature dies out entirely, you need not be very sorry. I shouldn't be if ours did." And then come some murmurs of "light," "superficial," "unsound," and more to the same effect.

"My good sir, this in the face of *Maga!* not to mention the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh*. With such *faits accomplis* against you, what can you say?"

"I don't believe in *faits accomplis*. They are the ex-



cuse of the timid man, and the capital of the unprincipled man. *Fait accompli* means, in plain English, that 'because it is so, therefore it ought to be so' — a doctrine which I, for one, will never assent to."

"Well, there is something in that last position of yours. We will condescend, therefore, to argue the question. Let me ask you, then.

"*First*, Do you see any *prima facie* improbability in supposing that a man may write a very good essay, who could not write two good volumes octavo; or a racy and interesting sketch, who could not put together a readable novel; or a few graceful poems, without having matter enough for a volume of poetry?

"*Secondly*, Is a treatise necessarily profound, because it is long; or superficial, because it is of practicable dimensions?

"*Thirdly*, When you use the term 'superficial,' do you really believe and mean to imply that periodical writers are in the habit of discussing subjects which they do not understand? Would you say, for instance, that Macaulay's reviews denote a man ignorant of history, or that Sedgwick knows less geology than the man who wrote the *Vestiges of Creation*, or that Mitchell knew less Greek than Lord Brougham?

"But perhaps it is the literary criticism to which you object. You are an author yourself, perhaps, though we have not the pleasure of recollecting you. You have written a goodsized volume of *Something, and Other Poems*, and cannot bear that your thoughts and rhymes should be scrutinized and found fault with by a reviewer — that your immortal fire should be tested in so earthy a crucible. In that case you will find many more or less distinguished names to sympathize with and encourage you. There is Bulwer, with whom the word critic is an exponent of everything that is low, and mean, and contemptible; and on our side of the water (sorry are we to say it) a much milder man than Bulwer — Washington Irving — has spoken of the critical tribe as having little real influence, and not deserving more influence than they have; while of the small fry of authorlings, there is no end of those who are ready to rate the reviewer roundly for 'finding fault with his betters.' One cannot even condemn an epic of impracticable length and hopeless



mediocrity — nay, not so much as hint that verses are not necessarily poetry — without being assailed by an unceremonious *argumentum ad hominem* — ‘You couldn’t make better.’\* And perhaps the critic could not. It is more reasonable to suppose that he wouldn’t if he could, entertaining the commendable conviction, that to spend a day, much more a month or a year, in writing middling verse, is an awful waste of time. But what an absurd irrelevancy of counter-charge! Suppose Brummell had found fault with the Nugee or Buckmaster of his day for misfitting him, and the schneider had replied, ‘Mr. Brummell, you couldn’t make as good a coat in a year.’ ‘Very probably not,’ the beau might have retorted; ‘but my business is to wear the coat, and yours to make it.’ Must a man be able to concoct a *bisque d’écrevisse* himself, before he can venture to hazard an opinion on the respective merits of the *Trois Frères* and the *Café Anglais*? Or shall he be denied the right of giving a decided vote and holding a decided opinion in politics, because he has not ability or opportunity to become a cabinet minister to-morrow? In seeking to put down, or affecting to despise criticism, the author makes a claim which no other distinguished character ventures. The artist does not insist on controlling the judgment of his contemporaries, still less the statesman. Did a premier fulminate his dictum to the effect that no journalist had a right to find fault with his measures, he would raise a pretty swarm of hornets about his ears. By what precedent or analogy, then, can the poet, or novelist, or historian, set himself up as autocrat in that realm of letters, which is proverbially a republic?

“Besides, suppose for a moment that all professional critics were Sir-Peter-Lauried in the most complete manner, who should help to guide the popular mind in determining on the merits of a work? Are we to trust the written puffs of the author’s publisher, or the spoken puffs of his friends? Or are *authors* only to judge of authors, and is it quite certain that in this way we shall

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\* We have heard this *argument* again and again in America, generally in reference to the seediest of verses; and there could not be a greater proof of the vagueness and erroneousness of American public opinion as to the nature and object of criticism, and the qualifications for exercising it.



always obtain unprejudiced and competent judgments? Or shall we make an ultimate appeal to the public themselves, and decide a book's merits by its sale — a test that would put Jim Crow infinitely before Philip Van Artevelde? No doubt a *bad* critic is a very bad thing; but it is not a remarkably equitable proceeding to judge of any class by the worst specimens of it; and surely it is no fairer to condemn critics *en masse*, because some of them have formed erroneous judgments or uttered predictions which time has falsified, than it would be to condemn authors *en masse*, because many of them have written stupid or dangerous books. Let us ask ourselves soberly what a critic is — not the caricature of one that Bulwer would draw, but such an idea of one as any dispassionate and well-informed man would conceive. In the first place, criticism depends very much on taste, and taste is of all faculties that which is founded on and supported by education and cultivation. Therefore the critic must be a liberally educated man in the highest sense of the term. And as he has to be conversant with niceties of thought and expression, philology and the classics should have formed a prominent element in his education. We should be very suspicious of that man's critical capacity, who had not thoroughly studied (by which we do *not* mean being able to speak) at least one language besides his own. Then, as a matter of course, before beginning to write about books, he must have read many books of all sorts, and not only read, but studied and comprehended them. All which will help us to see why the professional critic is likely to be a better judge of books than the professional author, because the preparation of the former renders him eminently eclectic; while the latter is apt to have a bias towards peculiarities of his own, and thus to judge of others by a partial standard.

"Next, the critic must be a courageous and independent man. His judgment upon a book must be entirely irrespective of any popular outcry for or against it. If he is at all apt to float with the opinions of others, he cannot be the adviser and assistant of the public, but will only encourage accidental error or premeditated deception. For a similar reason, he will keep all personal and private considerations out of view. He



must not be supposed to know the author, except as exhibited in his works. But while personality is the bane of criticism, partisanship, moral or political, is so far from being a hinderance to the critic, that it is actually an aid to him. If he has legitimate grounds for praising a coadjutor or condemning an opponent, he will write all the better for his partisanship; for, indulging that partisanship, he feels himself, if he be an honest partisan, to be also serving the public. We do not pretend to have enumerated all the requisites for a critic. There are some natural qualities, which, if not indispensable, are at least a great assistance. Thus we find men who have the same immediate perception of styles that portrait painters have of countenances, and can immediately assign to any anonymous writing its author, though the peculiarities which distinguish that author be so light that it is not easy to illustrate, much less to explain them. And thus, if you ask such a man; 'How do you know that — wrote this? What turn of expression or traits, of style can you point to?' He will reply, 'I can't give you any reason, only I am sure it is so; and so you will find it to be. He knows it, as it were, by intuition.' But we have already said quite enough on the general question; so let us leave our friend to wipe his spectacles, and come back to our particular case.

In examining the causes of the inferiority of American periodical literature, the most readily assignable, and generally applicable, is, that its contributors are mostly unpaid. It is pretty safe to enunciate as a general rule, that, when you want a good thing, you must pay for it. Now the reprints of English magazines can be sold for two dollars *per annum*, whereas a properly supported home magazine or review cannot be afforded for less than four or five. Hence no one will embark a large capital in so doubtful an undertaking; and periodical editorship is generally a last resource, or a desperate speculation. One of the leading magazines in New-York — perhaps, on the whole, the most respectable and best conducted — was started with a *borrowed* capital of 300 dollars (say L. 65). But it is hardly necessary to remark, that the proprietors of a periodical should have a fair sum in hand to begin with, that they may secure the services of able and eminent men to make a good start. The syllogistic conclusion is obvious. At



the same time, the editor finds at his disposal a most tempting array (so far as quantity and variety are concerned) of gratuitous contributions; for there is in America a mob of — not “gentlemen” altogether — men and women “who write with ease,” and whose “easy writing” seldom escapes the correlative proverbially attached to easy writing. This is, in a great measure, owing to the system of school and collegiate education, which, by working boys and girls of fourteen and upwards at “compositions” and “orations” about as assiduously as Etonians are worked at “longs and shorts,” makes them “writers” before they know how to read, and gives them a manner before they can have acquired or originated matter. Most of these people are content to write for nothing; they are sufficiently paid by the glory of appearing in print; many of them could write no better if they were paid. And it certainly is a temptation to be offered a choice gratis, among a variety of articles not absolutely unreadable, while you would be compelled to pay handsomely for one good one.

But the specific evils of such a system are numerous. In the first place, it prevents the editor from standing on a proper footing towards his contributors. Many a man who is not so engrossed with business but that he can *afford* to write for nothing, would, nevertheless, find an occasional payment of forty or fifty dollars a very timely addition to his income, and would prefer that way of making money to many others. But, in comparison with the editor, he appears positively a rich man, and as such is ashamed to ask for any pecuniary recompense. He feels, therefore, as if he were doing a charitable and patronising, or at least a very friendly act, in contributing, and will be apt to take less and less trouble with his contributions, and write chiefly for his own amusement; while the editor, on his part, does not like to run the chance of offending a man who can write him good articles occasionally, and feels a delicacy about declining to insert whatever the other writes.

Next, it often stands in the way of honest criticism. Men can be paid in flattery as well as in dollars, and the former commodity is more easily procurable than the latter. If the editor eulogises the author of “— and other Poems,” as at least equal to Tennyson, there is a



chance that some of the "other poems" may come his way occasionally. Of course, if he were able and willing to pay for good articles, he could always command the service of good contributors, and need not stoop to so unworthy a practice.

Thirdly, it destroys all homogenousness and unity of tone in the periodical, by preventing it from having any permanent corps of writers. The editors must furnish good articles now and then, to carry off their ordinary vapid matter; and, accordingly, they are sometimes under the disagreeable necessity of paying for them; but not sufficiently often to make it worth the while of a writer, to whom the pecuniary consideration is an object, to attach himself permanently to any of their concerns. Hence, those men who expect to derive any appreciable part of their income from writing in periodicals, are continually changing their colours, and essentially migratory. And as the principal attraction of the unpaid writers is their variety, which is best provided for by frequently changing the supply of them, while one great inducement to themselves is the gratification of their vanity, which is best promoted by their appearing in the greatest number of periodicals, they also become migratory, and without permanent connexion. Accordingly, it is not uncommon for a periodical to change its opinions on men and things three or four times a year. Frequently, too, these changes are accompanied by disputes about unsettled accounts, and other private matters, which have an awkward tendency to influence the subsequent critical and editorial opinions of both parties. Now and then they lead to libel suits — sometimes to still greater extremities.

But the worst consequence of all is, the suspicion cast upon all offers from periodicals to really eminent writers, by the failure of editors (through had faith, or inability, or both) to fulfil promises made to their contributors. Some of these cases are positively startling. In one instance, a distinguished author was promised, *or given to understand*, that he would have as much as one thousand dollars a year. He wrote for two years steadily, and never received two cents.

We see, then, one great radical cause of inferiority in American periodical literature, affecting it in all its departments. But there are other influences which espe-



cially conspire to pervert and impede criticism. Some of these will be obvious, on referring back to our hints at the requisites for a critic. We said that he should be in the highest sense of the term a liberally educated man. Now this is what very few of the American periodical writers, professed or occasional, are. The popular object of education in the new world is to make men speak fluently and write readily about anything and everything — speaking and writing which, from their very fluency and readiness, tend to platitudes and commonplace. Those studies which depend on and form a taste for verbal criticism are pursued in a very slovenly and unsatisfactory manner; the penchant being for mathematics, from their supposed practical tendencies.\* Men read much, but they do not “mark, learn, and inwardly digest.” Their reading is chiefly of new books, a most uncritical style of reading, to which the words *reference*, *comparison*, *illustration*, are altogether foreign. Again, we said that our critic must not only be able to form, but ready to express his own opinion — in short, that he must be bold and independent. Now this is no easy or common thing in America, not so much from want of spirit and fear of the majority, as from want of *habit*; the democratic influence moulding all minds to think alike. At the same time, it must be admitted that a spurious public opinion does often exercise a directly repressing influence. Cooper says, in his last novel, that the government of the United States ought to be called the *Gossipias*, and certainly Mrs. Grundy is a very important estate in the republic. Then there are many powerful interests all ready to take offence and cry out. The strongest editor is afraid of some of these. And if these influences have such power over a newspaper, which has mercantile intelligence, advertisements, and other great sources of support, much more must they affect a magazine or re-

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\* It is hardly necessary to expatiate on the absurdity of this fallacy. Every man who reads anything better than newspapers, finds frequent use for his classics in the way of explaining quotations, allusions, &c., while nothing can be imagined more utterly useless in every-day life than Conic Sections and Differential Calculus, to any man not professionally scientific. But because arithmetic is the introductory branch of mathematics, and also the foundation of book-keeping, it is thought that working a boy at mathematics will make him a good man of business.



view. One great aim of an American magazine, therefore, is to tread on nobody's moral toes, or, as their circulars phrase it, "to contain nothing which shall offend the most fastidious" — be the same Irish renegade, repudiator, or Fourierite. Accordingly, nearly all the magazines and reviews profess and practise political neutrality; and the two or three exceptions depend almost entirely on their political articles and partisan circulation. It was once mentioned to us by the editor of a Whig (Conservative) Review, that he had *one* Democratic subscriber. And we know another editor who is continually apologising to his subscribers, and one half of his correspondents, for what the other half write. This has not always been the case. The *Southern Literary Messenger* was established to write up "the peculiar institutions," and therefore only suited to and intended for the southern market; but there was a time when, under the management of Mr. E. A. Poe, an erratic and unequal, but occasionally very brilliant writer, it had considerable circulation in the north. And the "Democratic Review," while it contained and paid for good articles, was subscribed to, and even written for by many Whigs.

Another enemy of true criticism in America is *provincialism*. There is no literary metropolis which can give decisive opinions, and the country is parcelled out among small cliques, who settle things their own way in their own particular districts. Thus, there are shining lights in Boston, who are "small potatoes" in New-York; and "most remarkable men" in the West, whom no one has remarked in the East. Sometimes, indeed, these cliques contrive to ramify and extend their influence into other places. This is effected by a regular system of flattery — "tickle me and I'll tickle you;" nor is there even an endeavour to conceal this. For instance, when the classical lion of a certain clique had been favourably reviewed by a gentleman in another city, whose opinion was supposed to be worth something, the periodical organ of the clique publicly expressed its thanks for the favour, and in return dug up a buried novel of the critic's, and did its best to resuscitate it by a vigorous puff. Here was a fair business transaction, with prompt payment. We have observed that the tendency of American reviewing is to indiscriminate praise. The exceptions



to this (setting aside some rare extravagances, which resemble the efforts of a bashful man to appear at ease, attempts to annihilate Cooper, or Tennyson, for instance) usually spring from some of the private misunderstandings we have aluded to; *e. g.* two *litterateurs* quarrel, one of them is kicked out of doors, and then they begin to *criticise* each other's writings. And the consequence is, that it is next to impossible to pass an unfavourable opinion upon anything, without having personal motives attributed to you, and getting into a personal squabble about it. When an author, or an artist, or an institution is condemned, the first step is, to find out, if possible, the writer of the review, and the next to assail him on private grounds. Indeed, the author's friends do not always stop at pen and paper. Some years ago, an English magazinist charged a fair versifier of the West with having "realized" some of his inspirations — a very absurd claim by the way, as there was nothing in the disputed stanzas which would have done any man much credit. Soon after, the Kentucky papers announced that a friend of the lady had gone out express by the last steamer, for the purpose of "regulating" the Englishman. What the result was we have never heard.

Such are some of the causes which militate against the attainment of a high standard in American periodical literature. For some years it went on very swimmingly *on credit*; but it is exceedingly doubtful, to say the least, if the experiment could be successfully repeated. We have seen that many of these obstacles are directly referable to the fact that the editorship of Monthlies and Quarterlies does not tempt men of capital into it; and it is not difficult to perceive that such of the others as are surmountable, can be most readily overcome by remunerating those engaged in the business. If good critics are well paid, it will be worth men's while to study to become good critics; and if a periodical is supported with real ability, it will make its way in spite of sectional or party prejudices, as we have seen was the case in some instances. And since it is plain that the republication of English magazines must interfere with the home article, the conclusion seems inevitable, that the passing of an international Copyright Law would be the greatest benefit that could be conferred on American periodical literature.

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## AMERICAN POETRY. \*

From an article in Fraser, July 1850.

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AFTER the Americans had established their political nationality beyond cavil, and taken a positive rank among the powers of the civilized world, they still remained subject to the reproach, that in the worlds of Art, Science, and Literature, they had no national existence. Admitting, or, at any rate, feeling, the truth of this taunt, they bestirred themselves resolutely to produce a practical refutation of it. Their first and fullest success was, as might be expected from their notoriously utilitarian character, in practical inventions. In oratory, notwithstanding a tendency to more than Milesian floridness and hyperbole, they have taken no mean stand among the free nations of Christendom. In history, despite the disadvantages arising from the scarcity of large libraries, old records, and other appliances of the historiographer, they have produced some books which are acknowledged to be well worthy a place among our standard works, and which have acquired, not merely an English, but a Continental reputation. In the fine arts, notwithstanding obviously still greater impediments — the want at home, not only of great galleries and collections, but of the thousand little symbols and associations that help to educate the artist — the consequent necessity of going abroad to seek all that the student requires — they have still made laudable progress. The paintings of Washington Allston are the most noteworthy lions in Boston; the statues of Powers command admiration even in London. In prose fiction, the sweet sketches of Irving have acquired a renown second only to that of the agreeable

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\* This article, like the one on American periodical Literature, was written anonymously for an English periodical, and written for its immediate readers, that is to say as much as possible from an English stand-point of view. This will account for its feigned ignorance of sundry minor local matters and for some other peculiarities. At the same time the writers' *opinions* are in no respect disguised.



essayists whom he took for his models, while the Indian and naval romances of Cooper are purchased at liberal prices by the chary bibliopoles of England, and introduced to the Parisian public by the same hand which translated Walter Scott. In poetry alone they are still palpably inferior: no world-renowned minstrel has yet arisen in the New-Atlantis, and the number of those versifiers who have attained a decided name and place among the lighter English literature of their day, or whose claims to the title of poet are acknowledged in *all sections* of their own country, is but small.

If we come to inquire into the causes of this deficiency, we are apt at first to light upon several reasons why it should *not* exist. In the first place, there is nothing unpoetical about the country itself, but everything highly the reverse. All its antecedents and traditions, its discovery, its early inhabitants, its first settlement by civilized men, are eminently romantic. It is not wanting in battle-grounds, or in spots hallowed by recollections and associations of patriots and sages. The magnificence of its scenery is well known. The rivers of America are at the same time the most beautiful and the most majestic in the world: the sky of America, though dissimilar in hue, may vie in loveliness with the sky of Italy. No one who has floated down the glorious Hudson (even amid all the un-ideal associations of a gigantic American steamer), who has watched the snowy sails — so different from the tarry, smoky canvass of European craft — that speck that clear water; who has noticed the faultless azure and snow of the heaven above, suggesting the highest idea of purity, the frowning cliffs that palisade the shore, and the rich masses of foliage that overhang them, tinged a thousand dyes by the early autumn frost — no one who has observed all this, can doubt the poetic capabilities of the land.

A seeming solution, indeed, presents itself in the business, utilitarian character of the people; and this solution would probably be immediately accepted by very many of our readers. Brother Jonathan thinks and talks of cotton, and flour, and dollars, and the ups and downs of stocks. Poetry *doesn't pay*: he cannot appreciate, and does not care for it. 'Let me get something for myself,' he says, like the churl in Theocritus. 'Let



the gods whom he invokes reward the poet. What do we want with more verse? We have Milton and Shakespeares (whether we read them or not). He is the poet for me who asks me for nothing; and so the poor Muses wither (or as Jonathan himself might say, *wilt*) away, and perish from inanition and lack of sympathy. Very plausible; but now for the paradox. So far from disliking, or underrating, or being indifferent to poetry, the American public is the most eager devourer of it, in any quantity, and of any quality; nor is there any country in which a limited capital of inspiration will go farther. Let us suppose two persons, both equally unknown, putting forth a volume of poems on each side of the Atlantic; decidedly the chances are, that the American candidate for poetic fame will find more readers, and more encouragement in his country, than the British in his. Very copious editions of the standard English poets are sold every year, generally in a form adapted to the purses of the million; to further which end they are frequently bound two or three in a volume (Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats, for instance, is a favourite combination). Even hardlings like Pollok enjoy a large number of readers and editions. Nor is there — notwithstanding the much-complained-of absence of an international copyright law — any deficiency of home supply for the market. Writing English verses, indeed, is a much a part of an American's education, as writing Latin verses is of an Englishman's, — recited 'poems' always holding a prominent place among their public collegiate exercises; about every third man, and every other woman of the liberally-educated classes, write occasional rhymes, either for the edification of their private circle, or the poets'-corner of some of the innumerable newspapers that encumber the land; and the number of gentlemen and ladies one meets who have published a volume of *Something and Other Poems*, is perfectly astounding.

The true secret seems to be, that the Americans, as a people, have not received that education which enables a people to produce poets. For, however true the *poeta nascitur* adage may be negatively of individuals, it is not true positively of nations. The formation, of a national poetic temperament is the work of a long education, and the developement of various influences. A peculiar clas-



sicality of taste, involving a high critical standard, seems necessary, among the moderns, to high poetic production; and such a taste has not yet been formed in America. True, there are kinds of poetry — the Ballad and the Epic, which, so far as we can trace them, are born, Pallaslike, full-grown; which sound their fullest tone in a nation's infancy, and are but faintly echoed in its maturity. But these are numbers in which lisps the infancy, not of a nation merely, but of a race. And the Americans were an old race though a young nation. They began with too much civilization for the heroic school of poetry: they have not yet attained enough cultivation for the philosophic.

If this be not the right theory of American poetical deficiency, it remains only for us to take the line which many American critics really do\* — to deny the fact itself — to maintain that the American poetry of the present day is at least as good as the English; that *Marco Bozzaris* is on a par with the *Battle of the Baltic*, or any other pet lyric of Campbell's; that *Thanatopsis* goes a-head of anything in the *Excursion*; that the *Raven* is considerably better than *Locksley Hall*, and *Evangeline* beats the *Eve of St. Agnes* 'all to smash.' And may it not be so after all? Really the answer is not so easy to put into words, however obvious it may be to the minds of all of us. It is a very delicate matter to be judges in our own case. And an appeal to a third party, the French critics, for instance, would still be open to exceptions. It might be said that a writer in verse is slowly read and understood by those who speak a foreign language; that the necessity of waiting for a translation is a sore impediment to the growth of his fame abroad; that some of our poets would come off but badly if judged by this standard. How should we be prepared, it might be asked, to accept Tennyson's French reputation as a test of his place on Parnassus?

Making all allowances for the difficulty, we think there is one proof which the most ferociously patriotic

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\* We have before us an article which opens with this quiet assumption: — 'The fact is as undeniable as it is generally acknowledged, that, since the death of Lord Byron, the best fugitive poetry of the United States has been greatly superior to that of England.'



'States-Man' must admit. American productions in the other branches of literature have been received with no petty jealousy or niggard praise. The sober histories of Prescott and Bancroft; the romantic fictions of Irving and Cooper; the vivid seasketches of Dana and Melville, have all been deservedly approved and read by a British public, nay, some of them have acquired an English reputation at least simultaneous with, if not absolutely prior to, their native renown. Why should American poets alone be treated with injustice? Or is the public of England competent to decide in all other branches of literature, and incompetent only in this? But, in truth, the infancy of American poetry is clear to any candid and well-informed man from one single quality, setting all others out of the question — its character of imitation. Very few of the Transatlantic bards show distinctive features of originality, either in thought or expression. Take out some halfdozen from the ninety and more tenants of Mr. Griswold's poetical menagerie, and the verses of the rest might be shaken up promiscuously and re-distributed among them without its making much difference. The authors might possibly discriminate between their respective productions, but we doubt very much if the readers could. And even among the few selected poets, we should find at least as many reminiscences excited as new suggestions supplied. Thus Halleck reminds us sometimes of Byron, and more frequently of his favourite Campbell; Bryant brings up associations of Wordsworth, with an occasional dash, or rather dilution, of Collins; Whittier has evidently studied Macaulay's ballads, and so on. Poe and Longfellow perhaps exhibit the most originality of thought, and marked expression in language, of any whom the volume contains; yet the former often shows the direct influence of Tennyson, Miss Barrett, and the Keats' school generally, while the latter's quaint and pretty verses are occasionally redolent of the earlier English sacred poets.

Among the proximate influences which impede the poetic progress of the Americans, one of the most evident, as well as one of the most active, is the great deficiency of wise and independent criticism. The tendencies of American reviewers are to undeviating eulogy — in the words of one of their number, they consider that



'books, like men, should be judged by their goodness rather than their badness'—doubtless a very charitable and engaging rule, but one likely to be productive of unfortunate consequences to the innocent who invariably adopts it in judging of either books or men. One cause of this erroneous theory and practice of criticism we have already hinted at; another is to be found in the adroit system of puffery adopted by the large American publishing-houses; and a mis-directed national vanity has, probably, its share in producing the effect. It is customary for these writers to boast, with much self-complacency, of the superiority of their 'soft sawder,' over the condemnatory tone familiar to English reviewers. Certainly one of the most captivating of democratic fallacies is the idea that excellence can be best obtained by lowering the standard of it; but men of critical pretension might at least recollect, that if *nil admirari* is a deadening and chilling mistake, *omne admirari* is as dangerous an error the other way; that if the former is the mark of a *blasé* and a misanthrope, the latter is equally the attribute of the rustic who, on his first visit to town, takes all the tinsel he sees in the streets for gold, all the stucco for stone, and all the 'ladies fair and free' for great women of fashion.

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## FALSE PRO-SLAVERY ANALOGIES.

Evening Post 1854.

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SO well known are the persuasive effects of constant repetition, that to enlarge on them seems little short of commonplace. Every school-boy can tell you the consequences of familiarity with vice, as expressed by the poet, and the silliest platitude on the stage becomes a sort of joke by dint of continued reiteration. The claims of Mohammedanism to a divine origin would at once be repelled by our readers as unworthy serious consideration, yet the journals of distinguished missionaries in the East show us that they felt obliged there, associating with a Mohammedan population, to investigate the whole question thoroughly and sum up the arguments on both sides.



It is to be feared that the American public is becoming accustomed to the defence of slavery — its defence not as a thing palliable or tolerable, a melancholy, necessity or a choice of evils, but as a positive good, a *bonum in se*. The most salient feature of argument in this bold vindication is a sophistical analogy by which the exceptional and barbarizing institution of slavery is compared to the universal and heaven-sanctioned relations of marriage and family. This argument may indeed be said to have assumed a semi-official character, since one of our foreign ministers publicly boasts of having put down, or at least out-argued, a famous British admiral by means of it.

It is desirable that this pretended analogy should be carefully examined and deliberately weighed in all its details and bearings.

Briefly it may be stated thus: "You say that slavery is wrong, because the master has power over him and sometimes treats him cruelly. But this would be an equally valid argument against the institutions of marriage and family, for a man has power over his wife and children, and wives and children frequently suffer ill treatment from their husbands and parents."

Very well. Here is a comparison fairly placed before us for consideration. Let us first take the wife's case, and see how her relation to her husband resembles or differs from that of the slave to his master. First, as to the beginning and origin of the relation: According to the theory of all civilized countries the wife becomes such voluntarily, and this is practically true in a large majority of cases. Nay more, in most cases not only does she enter the relation *voluntarily* — *i. e.* not against her wishes — but in direct consequence of her wishes, which form an important element in the causes of her marriage. Or, in the plainest and briefest English, most women who get married want to be married.

Now the slave finds himself in his relation to his master in one of two ways. Either he is *born* into his condition — of course without his wishes being consulted — or he is *forced* into it against his wishes. Here, then, we have at once a fundamental and original difference between the two relations compared. One is entered into voluntarily, the other is not. Anything which may befall



a wife, as such, is to a certain extent the consequence of her own act. Whatever happens to a slave, as such, is in no respect the consequence of his own act.

But what *can* befall a wife that her position should be compared to the slave's? What the slave's condition is we know tolerably well. It is unnecessary to do more than allude to it. His master is legally authorized to correct him *ad libitum*. He is legally punishable, even by death, if he resists. This legal correction is only limited by death, the infliction of which may be punished if it can be proved by white witnesses.

In order to make the case of the wife *in any respect* parallel, it would be necessary to show either that her husband was legally authorized to beat her; or that she labored under some civil disqualification which hindered her from being fully protected by the written law; or lastly, that the unwritten law of public opinion encouraged, or at least permitted, a husband to beat his wife.

Now it is well known that the same law which protects any woman against any man, or any man against any other physically stronger than himself, protects a wife against her husband. She may bring him before the same court; he will be visited with the same punishment. Nor is this a mere theoretical right; being a lawful witness in her own case, she is as practically competent to avail herself of it as any other maltreated person. And lest fear of a repetition of cruelty should deter her from giving evidence against her husband, she has an acknowledged right to quit his roof and remove herself from his power. Was such a thing ever even thought of as the removal of a slave from his master's power for ill usage?

As to the unwritten law on the subject — the popular feeling and social sentiment — all this is even more in the wife's favor. Among all respectable people an occasional, not to say habitual, wife-beater is socially outlawed. In the very lowest class, all that can be said of him is that he is not always an object of continual abhorrence. Any pretence even of oppression on the part of a husband raises a host of friends for the aggrieved wife. This chivalrous feeling has even been made a political engine. What more popular argument in favor of the Maine Law than the tendency of drunkenness to



make men maltreat their wives? Quere : Did a temperance lecturer at the South ever inveigh against drunkenness on the ground that it made men beat their slaves?

The only limitation to the wife's power of remedy, which can be alleged, is a purely sentimental one, (in the good sense of the word,) namely, that delicacy, dread of public scandal, and consideration for her children and her family generally, may induce her to suffer in silence. The answer to this is, that such considerations have weight on both sides of the relation. The very same motives may lead a husband to pass over grave irregularities or even the most serious wrong on the part of his wife. It is clear, then, that no correspondence can be made out here in favor of slavery, an institution where all the privilege is on one side, and all the suffering on the other.

But the advocate of slavery changes the venue, and by so doing thinks he has brought facts to bear against us. "What you affirm may be true of our free states," he exclaims, "but look at England! Look at the London police reports! Husbands beat, mangle and mutilate their wives, and are only punished for it by a few months' imprisonment." Very well, say we, first show us some cases in which a slaveholder has been punished for beating, mangling or mutilating his own slave, even with a few days' imprisonment. Next consider that the English have never attempted to deny, defend or palliate the enormity of wife beating among their lower orders; still less have they ever murdered or wished to murder any one for calling attention to it. Note especially that, in order to make the cases at all parallel, it would be necessary that in all trials for such offences not only the evidence of the wife, but that of any other woman whatsoever, should be inadmissible.

It will be seen, then, that the analogy requires a much larger number of legs than it possesses, to make it go on all fours.

But we have not yet done cutting the ground from under it. Brutal usage of wives by their husbands is an "institution" almost peculiar to England. Russia may claim some share in it, but in other European countries it prevails to a very slight extent. It is, therefore, but fair to conclude that the cause of it is not to be sought in



the institution of marriage, because it is not conterminous with that institution but that it is rather owing to a certain leaven of brutality in the English character, eradicated, or at least restrained, by religion and education among the higher classes, but having its full swing with the lower. If our opponents can show that there are slaveholding communities in which the slaves are not habitually treated with cruelty, they will then be entitled to claim that the cruelties practised on the southern slaves, (as well as the murders, duels, street fights, &c., among the masters,) are not in any respect attributable to the institution of slavery, but only to a natural leaven of brutality in the southern character. It is doubtful whether they would take much by this motion; but even this doubtful advantage is denied them. It is impossible to produce any country in which slavery has long existed, without involving cruel treatment of the slaves.

The analogy asserted between the wife's condition and the slave's fails, therefore, in every point of principle involved. The child's however, has two *prima facie* points of undoubted resemblance. First, the child, like the slave, finds himself in a state of subjection to which his consent has not been asked; secondly, the father has a legal right to inflict corporal punishment on his child, as the master has on his slave, and this legal right is, as in the other case, morally supported by custom and public opinion.

But when we come to examine *why* the child and the slave are placed in their respective conditions, the analogical resemblance vanishes at once. The child finds himself in a state of subjection to his parents. Why? Because from his physical and mental incapacity he must be under the control and direction of some one; and therefore law and custom put him under the control of those persons who, in all reasonable probability, will love him and care for him more than any other persons in the world would, being moved thereto by one of the strongest, if not *the* strongest, of natural affections. He is subject to his parents for his own benefit — that is the leading idea of the relation.

But the slave is subject to the master for the master's profit — that is the leading idea of his relation. The talk we sometimes hear about the slave being placed in his state of servitude for the sake of civilizing and



Christianizing him is in most instances sheer cant and blasphemy; and even admitting that such results are in certain cases and to a certain extent obtained by slavery, they are still only incidents, not original reasons of the relation. Its fundamental idea is that the slave belongs to the master for the master's profit, just as his horse or carriage, or any other chattel, animate or inanimate, does.

The origin of the two relations, therefore, though superficially similar, is fundamentally different.

Now for the right to punish: Admitting that it is the same in both cases, we proceed to examine what are the safeguards in each case against its abuse. The child is protected by one of the strongest natural affections. Nothing measures this affection better than the strength of the motives required to overcome it — except, indeed, the astonishment excited at its being overcome by any motives, however strong. History assigns the foremost place among the worthies of loyalty and patriotism to him who has sacrificed his children rather than betray his king or his country. The woman who leaves her children to follow a man is considered to have given the last proof of *frantic* devotion to him. Law and custom may safely place an arbitrary power in the parent's hand, when there exists so strong a motive against its abuse.

Now, what is the feeling of a master towards his slave? Very often it must resemble that which he would entertain towards any beast of burden. At best it is the sentiment of affection for an old family servant. Who will pretend to compare this with the affection of a parent for a child? The prince, in the fairy tale, kills his two children to re-animate his faithful John. This is all very well in a fairy tale, but we do not expect such things in real life.

How exalted an opinion should we form of a man's patriotism from being told that he had suffered two or three of his slaves to be killed by the enemy rather than turn traitor!

The only general feeling at work to protect the slave is one of interest and calculation. This gives him, practically, about as much protection as a horse has. The man who maltreats his horse will probably hear some remarks calculated to annoy him; perhaps he may



even fall into the hands of some society for the prevention of cruelty to animals — (there are no corresponding societies in slaveholding communities;) but neither his legal nor his moral punishment will in any way compare with that of a man detected in cruelty to his offspring.

Let it also be noted, that it is never for the parent's interest (save in some exceptional and monstrous cases, like those of the English burial-clubs,) to destroy his children; but we have statistical records to prove that it is often for the planter's interest to *work up* his stock of slaves in a certain period of time, and supply their place by fresh purchases.

But further: The parent has reasons of prospective interest for not maltreating his children. He naturally looks to them for support and comfort in his old age. It is of great importance to him that, when emancipated from his control, they should not regard him with indifference or aversion. Whereas there is very little chance of the slave's ever being in a condition where *his* feelings can make much difference to his master.

It may indeed be said that masters will treat their slaves well for fear of their running away; but the precautions of another sort, taken against evasion, show that slaveholders themselves have little faith in this motive.

We have spoken of children when emancipated from parental control. This brings us to consider the limited period of the child's subjection — a difference sufficient of itself to vitiate the whole analogy, and render the comparison at once inadmissible. As well might it be argued that members of the learned professions ought not to contract matrimony, because they were prohibited from doing so while students at college.

Once more: The child, though legally punishable by his parents, has legal remedies against inhuman punishment beyond those of the slave. If any stranger takes up his cause, he may be heard as a witness against his own parents — so may his brothers and sisters or any other children.

Finally: In every supposable case of a parent's maltreating his legitimate child, he would be as likely or more likely to maltreat an illegitimate child. Therefore the occasional ill-treatment of children by parents is no argument against the institution of marriage. But it cannot



be similarly shown that the master who ill treats a slave would be as likely to ill treat a servant. Therefore the ill usage of slaves is a direct argument against the institution of slavery.

We conclude, then, that the relation of child and parent resembles that of slave and master in two bare facts; but in all the circumstances qualifying those facts, it differs so utterly as to destroy all argument drawn from analogy of the cases.

Some of the above remarks look like demonstrations of self-evident truths. We may be accused of knocking down men of straw. And so we are; *but it is not we who have set them up*. The slaveholders have erected them to do duty for real men, which they will if not knocked over. The puppets which the Italian bandit stationed at the roadside yielded to the touch of an infant; but until their real nature was detected, they served him as effectually in his schemes of plunder as living and vigorous accomplices could have done.

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## THE ENGLISH PRESS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.

Fraser, July 1855.

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THE newspapers and periodicals of Great Britain have been in the habit of handling the Americans, their customs, habits, laws, and proceedings generally, with the smallest possible amount of gloves. The American public — by this term we do not mean merely the American daily press, which we are far from accepting as a complete or adequate representative of the American public — complains of this treatment, and denounces the attacks made on it as ill-natured, unfair, and prejudiced. To this it is replied that the Americans are absurdly thin-skinned and sensitive, and moreover supremely inconsistent in wishing to put down free discussion, and curtail the largest liberty of criticism. However inconsistent or illogical the Americans may have been in some of these



complaints, however much they may in the abstract, deserve a greater or less part of the things said about them, and the jokes cracked on them, we incline to think that the course pursued by the bulk of the English press is an ill-advised one, and very mischievous in its practical results, for reasons which we shall proceed to explain.

Once for all be it understood at the start, that in arraigning the practice of the leading British journals and periodicals, we do not impugn the truth of their fundamental facts. We charge them with no falsification of premises. Neither do we question the excellence of their leaders as models of literary composition and satirical writing. What we *do* question, and that most seriously, is their *policy*; and our object in the following pages will be to show why their usual style of treating American subjects is peculiarly impolitic and dangerous.

It is often said, and generally admitted, that the Americans are a remarkably sensitive people. Allowing this to be the case, the obvious inference would seem to be, that there was no great wisdom in going out of the way to irritate them, since grave journalists who write on international matters are not expected to act the part of practical jesters, aggravating a testy individual for the mere purpose of seeing what fun he will make when he loses his temper. But we must look into the matter more closely. There are different kinds of sensitiveness. The French, for instance, are almost proverbially touchy, but their touchiness is by no means the same as that of the Americans.

The Frenchman is sensitive about little every-day occurrences which affect his personal dignity. If you chance to jostle him, or tread on his toes, or derange his hat, or interfere with his dog, he flies into a passion. True, he is not apt to proceed to personal violence, and he will generally accept with graciousness a timely apology, but until or unless thus appeased, his verbal wrath is excessive. Nor indeed is he slow to get up an 'affair of honour' on grounds as trivial as the above. When it comes to pen and ink, however, he is more philosophic. The criticisms of foreigners he seldom takes the trouble to read, even when able to do so; those of his compatriots



he laughs at and repays in kind. French *seuilletons* have indeed been the cause of some very striking duels, but however great the *éclat* attendant on these encounters, their number is small in proportion to that of duels arising from other causes, and to the provocation given one another by the Parisian *littérateurs*.

Now the sensitiveness of the American manifests itself in a way precisely the reverse of this. An accidental collision in a crowd, or any similar want of personal courtesy, is so far from being sharply resented by him, that it is a chance if he even remarks it. You might commit a rudeness of this sort in America a hundred times with impunity, unless you were so unlucky as to stumble upon a professional bully of the 'Mose' sort, whose amusement as well as business it is to pick quarrels.

A recent French traveller has mentioned with surprise an incident which occurred to him soon after his arrival in New-York, and which exactly illustrates our proposition. In a crowded street he chanced to spit on a man who was passing. He expected angry words, perhaps something worse, but the aggrieved party either not noticing the accident at all, or correctly appreciating it as an accident, passed on without the slightest remark. On the other hand, the American attaches an extraordinary importance to whatever appears in print, and especially in widely circulated print, like the columns of a newspaper. He is not always critical to discriminate the value of the source whence the praise or censure proceeds; it is enough for him that it circulates. Much elated by praise, he is correspondingly annoyed by blame. This fact explains in a great measure the inferiority of American literary criticism, such criticism being at a discount, because when honestly exercised it almost inevitably leads to personal squabbles. It also goes far to account for the influence wielded by some of the American daily papers, an influence of which we should vainly seek the explanation, either in the literary merit of their articles or the personal character of their conductors. Most of the scandalous papers in England have died out, not because their proprietors were perpetually cowed or perpetually prosecuted, but because the public refused to patronize them. In America the convicted libeller pays his costs and damages out of the



increased circulation which the notoriety of a conviction procures for him; and the thrashing received in his own person, or vicariously in that of one of his reporters, acts as a *réclame* for his journal. The suit and the assault are testimonies of the highest kind to his powers of annoyance. And thus the Barnard Gregory of New-York becomes a candidate for a foreign mission, and the Alderman Harmer of Nassau street actually obtains a seat in Congress. But, it may be asked, is not a sensitiveness which leads to such results highly reprehensible? That is not the point now under discussion. Reprehensible or not, we find the sentiment existing, and its existence must be taken into account in dealing with the people among whom it prevails. Moreover, this sentiment is aggravated tenfold by an unfortunate contrast between a peculiarity of the English intellect and a peculiarity of the American apprehension. The cultivated English mind delights in banter, in that species of saucy but not malevolent railery which popularly denominates itself *chaff*, and which does not necessarily imply any want of respect or esteem for the object of it, though its form and manner are anything but respectful. What English writers love to boast of is undeniably true — that they exercise this propensity on their own affairs and institutions quite as unsparingly as they do on those of foreigners. They are as critical on themselves as on other people. The misfortune is, however, that other people do not always understand it so well, *and of all people the worst to understand it are the Americans*. They are too serious and earnest to take chaff at its just value and meaning. It is not within their comprehension that a paragraphist can quiz an individual or make fun of a nation without entertaining an intense personal or political enmity to him or it.

When the English journalist says triumphantly, 'We satirize things at home as freely as things abroad,' he considers himself arrived at the *ne plus ultra* of controversy on that head. Yet this sort of argument is surely not to be admitted in its broadest form, and without limitation. It would hardly do to carry out in all the transactions of everyday life. A man who were to beat his neighbour's wife, for instance, would find small justification in the fact that he had been in the habit of beating



his own. Nor in this particular case would it be impossible to turn the argument round, and reason inversely, thus: the Americans (or any other people) exercise a certain amount of reserve in discussing certain subjects, therefore they expect that foreigners will do the same.

'It is the privilege, and the duty, and the pride of an English journalist to speak the truth without fear or favour.' Very well. This is a magnificent sentiment, which we should reluctantly incur the responsibility of even seeming to take exception to. But the implied practical application is by no means a logical inference. The necessity of telling the truth does not involve the necessity of telling it in the most disagreeable manner, and with an elaborate garnish of the most aggravating circumstances. A gentleman is bound to tell the truth, but is he not also bound to give no unnecessary offence?

'We defy any one to contradict our statements in matters of fact. Has not this, and that, and the other been said and done in America? And if our statements cannot be controverted, what is there to complain of? But surely between the wholesale fabrications of the *New-York Herald*, or the *New-York Tribune*, on the one hand, and a perfectly candid and fair representation on the other, there is a tolerably wide range. It appears more a platitude than a paradox to say that a number of truths may be told so as to leave an untrue impression, yet this simple proposition is constantly ignored in the practice of the English press. One obvious method of doing this is to omit or slur over counterbalancing facts. Would any one, for example, who depended wholly or chiefly for his American information on the columns of *The Times*, get a correct idea of the state of things across the Atlantic; We answer unhesitatingly, No! His information, though *positively* true, would be *relatively* false, from its one-sided nature and dexterous colouring.

We cannot better illustrate our meaning than by comparing the conduct and language of the English press generally (there are some noteworthy exceptions, such as the *Daily News*) towards America, with its conduct and language towards the German powers. Doubtless every English journalist would repel with scorn the insinuation that he was influenced either by fear or by any interested motive to conciliate those powers at the



expense of truth and freedom. Yet how discreet, and courteous, and patient, and long-suffering has been the general tone of the English press towards Germany? What can be the reason of this difference? Is it theoretical sympathy! Surely an Englishman cannot feel a marked preference for the institutions of Austria, political or religious, over those of America. Is it practical gratitude for better deserts? No unarmed Englishman has been cut down in the streets of New-Orleans by an armed American officer, nor have English travellers been stopped and pestered with impossible passport and custom-house regulations, and treated like suspected conspirators or detected pickpockets by American functionaries. Suppose *The Times* should try for a few months to be as civil to America, as it usually is to Austria — just for the sake of curiosity and variety — would anybody be the worse for it?

Our principal object, however, is to scrutinize the *policy*, rather than the fairness of the course pursued in regard to America by the greater portion of the English press. For this purpose it will be necessary to take a brief retrospective view of its historical relations with America.

During the first forty years of the present century, while the old party lines of Whig and Tory continued to be distinctly drawn, and to comprise between them nearly the whole of the English political world, the American Republic was generally regarded as a sort of outdoor off-shoot and result of Whig principles, and accordingly came in for its share of the general condemnation pronounced by Tory writers on everything Whig. For the same reason Whig writers generally defended it, sometimes perhaps in a tone of supercilious patronage, but at any rate defended it. In those days *Blackwood*, the *Quarterly*, the *Standard*, &c., noticed the Americans unfavourably, as a matter of course, and a bit of party 'business.' Equally as a matter of course the *Edinburgh*, the *Morning Chronicle*, &c., took their part. *The Times* was for or against, according to the side it happened to be on. But even before the present *bouleversement* and disarrangement of English political parties, which has brought about such funny results here and there (making the *Morning Post* a Whig organ, for instance) — even



before this upsetting of old party landmarks, it came to be generally allowed that the Western Republic had outgrown its *quasi*-dependence on English party politics. The Conservatives no longer felt obliged to attack it, and many of the Liberals certainly got well over their propensity to praise it. Were we asked to name the English publications which during the last twelve years have been most systematically virulent in their anti-American articles, we should feel little hesitation in naming, among newspapers, *The Times*, which has been generally on the liberal side during that period; among periodicals, the late *Foreign Quarterly*, which though not openly hanging out any political flag, was obviously and decidedly Palmerston Whig.

It is clear then that no English journalist is bound by party ties at home to adopt an unfavourable tone towards America. He is left perfectly free in that respect. The excuse was a tolerably good one while it lasted (and conversely let us add, must be accepted as a palliation for much of the nonsense which the democratic and Administration prints in America are wont to utter about England), but it exists no longer, and the journalist has only to consider the interest of all England in reference to the relations of the two countries.

In America the case may be fairly stated thus. The feeling of a majority of the population is, we regret to say, unfavourable to England. But there is a large and respectable minority always existing, though not always composed of the same elements or acting in concert, which is decidedly friendly. Now it is clearly the policy of the English press (assumed as the representative of the English people) to support and strengthen this minority, *whereas its almost constant tendency has been to play into the hands of the majority.*

How so? Simply thus: by thrusting the minority into the same boat with the majority, confounding them in the same censure, assailing them with the same ridicule, weakening at the same time their chance of success in opposition, and their inclination to opposition.

There are cases in which it is hard to separate the minority from the majority, in dealing with a foreign nation. Thus it would be impossible to go to war with the majority and remain at peace with the minority. Yet,



even in this extreme instance, he would be but a poor statesman who should take no account of the minority in the hostile country. Let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that there is a strong peace party in Russia, numbering say one fourth of the great landed proprietors and the influential persons at court. On this hypothesis, it would be the clear interest and duty of the allies, by offering fair and unexceptionable terms of negotiation, and by other obvious means, to endeavour to strengthen the hands and increase the numbers of this peace party. If, then, our proposition be true even of nations engaged in actual hostilities, how much more must it be of those between whom not only extensive diplomatic, but the closest and most important commercial, relations exist.

We have remarked in a former article that the American minority has a constant source of power in the possibility of its becoming a majority. But a stronger point than this remains behind. Not only do the words and acts of the American Government, so promiscuously attributed to the American people, not always represent the *whole* of that people, *but they do not always represent the majority of it*. We put aside the cases in which the President and the Senate have been at variance, for the Senate might be considered a *quasi*-aristocratic body. But the House of Representatives, chosen more directly by the people than the President himself, frequently changes its political complexion during the latter half of the presidential term, simultaneously with, and in consequence of, the state elections going against the administration. Nor ought such a condition of things to excite surprise, least of all in England, where at this moment it is doubtful if any Ministry could be formed which would be sure on all the great questions of the day of either commanding a majority in Parliament, or representing a majority of the nation.

But the English press generally despises the trouble of making these obvious distinctions, and prefers to confound all American men and things in indiscriminate condemnation. Congress passes a measure of doubtful propriety after a long conflict, by a small majority. Perhaps the next Congress may reverse this decision; at any rate the circumstances show that a large party in the country is opposed to the measure. Never mind; put it down



to the discredit of the whole country and all the parties in it. One section of the Union carries some favourite plan of its own, to which the other section is bitterly opposed. Blame that other section too for what it could not prevent by any means short of civil war. The administration makes some injudicious appointment, or issues some silly manifesto. That too is the fault of the American people, though the American people at that very moment may be condemning, in the most practical way, at all the local elections, the conduct of the administration.

It will give more precision to our statements if we examine in detail the conduct of the English press towards certain American political parties.

And first, the late Whig party (we are obliged to speak of it in the past tense, for it is now as completely disorganised—the old Tories or Protectionists here). No one tolerably read in American political history can doubt that this party, which for twenty years occasionally held the reins of power, but generally acted the part of the regular Opposition, was on the whole decidedly favourable to England. It may not have been so openly or *noisily* English as the Democratic party during most of the same period was French, but its predilections were decidedly that way. They were so, partly by reason of its partial descent from the old Federalist Opposition; partly from its comprising a majority, not exactly of the literary men, perhaps, but of the best educated and most accomplished men in the country; partly from its including also a majority of the old Protestant and Puritan feeling; \* in short, from a variety of causes, which it is unnecessary to enumerate. Did the English press reciprocate the good offices of the American Whigs? A conscientious study of that press during many years of the period referred to, leaves no room for other than a negative answer. The liberal prints generally attacked the American Whigs for not being Free-traders. The conservative prints generally assailed them for not going far enough in their resistance to the anti-English parties, forgetting that they had duties on both sides, and were bound to look at home

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\* The overthrow of this principle, and the rise of a radical and irreligious section in the party, was the main cause of its final overthrow.



as well as abroad. The really eminent statesmen and orators idolized by the Whigs were damned with faint praise by the English press. In fine, its whole tendency was, on the one hand, to throw cold water on the sympathy of its American friends, and on the other, to weaken their influence by giving a handle to their adversaries. On the downfall of the Whigs arose another opposition party, which had for some years previous maintained a sort of embryo existence, under the name of *Native American*, but which started into full vitality with the slang title of *Know-nothings*. Though this new political sect might in a rough way be described as opposed to all foreigners and foreign influence, many of its immediate developments were decidedly favourable to England. In the first place, negatively, because the English residents in the United States have never (much to their credit be it said) interfered in the politics of the country, and were therefore in no respect obnoxious to the Knownothings; and then positively, because one of their leading principles was opposition to the influence of the Irish emigrants, and particularly of the Irish priests, an influence which, it is hardly necessary here to repeat, has been invariably hostile to England, and which, had its power only equalled its will, would long since have involved the two countries in open war. How has the English press treated the Know-nothings? Their appearance above the political horizon was greeted with a most virulent attack from *The Times*, and the comments of other journals upon them have been mostly depreciatory.

The anti-slavery and free-soil agitation in America fell in so exactly with the long-established moral and religious prepossessions of influential classes in England; it presented such an occasion for sentimental declamation and cheap sympathy as well as for the outpouring of real honest indignation; it afforded so happy a second edition of the Jenny Lind mania, in the double apotheosis of a woman who was at the same time a great lion and a great virtue, that it could not fail to be immensely popular with the public of Great Britain. The press was borne along by the stream. But it went rather behind than before public opinion. It was not sorry to have its fling at American institutions, but much less fond of praising American abolitionists. The same propensity to criticise



accessories, to carp and nibble at details, to ridicule minor extravagances, that marks its treatment of Americans generally, marks its treatment of the anti-slavery men in particular.

We repeat it, the general language of the English press\* towards Americans, one and all, is not such as to encourage the American admirers of England in their pro-English sympathies. Routine and obstinate conservatism unfortunately exist in other things besides military organization; the tone which might safely be used towards the United States when they numbered but a few millions, almost outside of the civilized world, and without external power or influence, physical or moral, has been continued down to a time when it is *dangerously* out of place. The Americans have been charged with a spirit of braggadocio, and it is possible that they may set an over-estimate on their progress in some respects, — in art, in literature, in criticism, even in morality, — but one thing they do appreciate correctly, and that is their growing importance in the material and political world. They know individually and collectively, that Europeans can no longer afford to slight them.

It is because we have the highest opinion of the talent, integrity, education, and social position of the gentlemen who write for the English press, that we offer for their consideration these remarks — remarks which they, from the height of their superior wit and cleverness, may possibly look down upon as feebly and clumsily expressed, but which are nevertheless dictated by a sincere desire of doing good. And if they desire to do good to the Americans, let them try it in some other way than by continually satirizing them. The Americans can find satirists among themselves at less expense to the common cause of humanity. The task is ungrateful anywhere, but if a native attempts it, the worst that can happen to him is that he or his family will be set up for marks to be lied at by the 'head devil' of the *Herald* or the *Tribune*, and all his subordinate imps and correspondents. The mischief stops with a certain amount of personal annoyance to himself; it does not make trouble between

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\* We are too happy to note some prominent exceptions, such as the *Daily News* and the *Westminster Review*.



two great countries. A joke is a very good thing, but there are cases in which it decidedly does not pay. The officer in colonial days who wrote a ribald and obscene song to ridicule the despised provincials, little thought that his fellow-soldiers would be ignominiously marched out of the country to that very tune, and that it would live to become the national air of a powerful people when his own name was irretrievably lost in oblivion. And should serious difficulties (which God avert!) ever arise between England and America, it would be a poor consolation to the friends of humanity to reflect that *The Times* had made this editor or that ambassador the laughing-stock of Europe.

## THE HACK-HORSE WOT WOULDN'T GO.

OR, HOW THE YANKEE DID THE YORKSHIREMAN.

(American Review, February 1847.)

Rap! rap!! rap!!!

No answer.

Three more raps and two kicks.

"Hullo who's there? What's the row?"

"Toomble oop, Benson, toomble oop!"

And Fred Peters tumbled in.

"Eeeee — yow! 'Tisn't church time yet," and I yawned awfully.

"Noa, but we're goaing to York, you know."

"Oh! Ah! Ye-es." And it began to dawn upon my somewhat obfuscated intellect that we were to be at York in time for the Cathedral service, which begins at 10 A. M. It was now halfpast 6, and we were in Leeds, twenty-four miles distant. Under this pressure I did "toomble oop," and set about my toilet vigorously.

Fred Peters was a right good fellow, half Yankee, half Yorkshire. I believe he was born in the good city of Gotham, but his dialect was precisely that of the Ridings. Adopted at first partly out of fun, partly as an aid in business, (at that time we New-Yorkers were



suffering for the sins of the Pennsylvania defaulters and Mississippi repudiators, and John Bull was very shy of us,) this peculiar modification of the vernacular had become his natural mode of speech, and he seldom used any other. We were sworn cronies, though in very different lines, he being learned in all mysteries of broadcloth, I a moderately learned and decidedly equestrian Cantab. Business had brought him, and pleasure me, to the north of England: our temporary headquarters were, as above hinted, at Leeds.

And now breakfast and other matutinal operations being successfully completed at half-past 7, we were ready to start. Our vehicle was one of the "Shem, Ham and Japhet Buggies," by Sidney Smith commemorated. The horse was a wiry dark bay, with a hammer head, never-resting ears, and no tail to signify. There were good points about him, but he had an aspect of unmitigated rowdiness that strongly reminded me of the "bhoys" on the 3d Avenue. And this *souvenir* of my beloved city moved me — no, kept me from moving; for I stood contemplating the fiery (and fired) steed in ecstasy of admiration.

"Handsome horse, that!" said Peters.

"Never mind, we're not proud." (A Cantab never is, if you will take his word for it.) In we jumped; I took the ribbons, of course, and off went rowdy at a good round pace.

#### FYTTE THE SECOND — (*Being Fight the First.*)

"One mile to Tadcaster. How far is that from York?"

"Ten moiles further."

"Not so bad that. Thirteen miles in — how much, Fred?"

"One hour and five minutes. Plenty o' toime; you'd better pull up a little."

Singularly enough the horse had come to the same conclusion just at that moment, for he began shaking his head with great rapidity, and decreasing the velocity of his legs in a corresponding ratio until he came to a walk. To this we had no objection; indeed, it was the very thing we intended. But after about fifty yards he came to a positive standstill. Even in this we were willing to acquiesce for a reasonable time, and allowed



him sixty full seconds for repose, after which I intimated the propriety of advancing. But the usual suggestions were quite lost upon our animal. Whip, reins and voice, equally failed to educe any symptoms of locomotion.

"Oi'll lead him," quoth Peters, the best natured of men, and out he leaped. For some twenty yards the horse condescended to proceed; then he stood stockstill rather than ever.

"Coom along, old horse! Coom wi' ye! (Here the horse backed a trifle.) Coo-om! poor fel-low! Ah! Benson, he'll nayther be driven nor coaxed," and Fred, for once in his life, looked like giving it up. For my part I essayed alternately every term of endearment and ob-jurgation, all to no purpose. The brute remained obstinately statuesque. As my friend, Dr. Whistle of Trinity, might have said, "no fortuitous concourse of itinerants was ever more deaf to the authoritative mandate of a policeman" than the Yorkshire Rosinante to our persuasions. He could not be induced to "move on" at any price.

"Confound you to all eternity!" I exclaimed at last; and springing up, I began to flagellate the refractory one in every part reachable. "Clear the track, Fred!" And he did, in good time for himself, for just as I had completed my circuit of castigation, the subject of it made a hunterlike bolt, tearing away tugs and traces as if they were paper, and leaving the buggy to its destiny. As I make it a principle always to stick to the reins, I found myself flying through the air in a very erratic curve, the locus of which it would require a better analyst than myself to determine. Even in this emergency, however, I retained sufficient presence of mind to draw one rein hard, by which means the horse was landed in a road-side gully, before he could drag me more than three or four leaps, and I escaped without further injury than a slight rent in my tweeds. As for Peters, he sat down on a big stone and laughed inextinguishably.

It does not take long to get a horse out of a ditch. I had had hunting experience enough to understand those sort of things. The next step was to head him towards our vehicle, which was no sooner done than he started off at a rate that bade fair to carry him back to Leeds in less time than he had come from it. And now I should have been compelled to let go the reins in self-defence,



but lo! in his headlong career he caught sight of the buggy, whereat he brought up all standing, shied right round and resumed his immobility. Once more I exhausted all my powers of persuasion to induce an advance, but as to making him move one step buggy-ward, you might as well try to make a French novelist believe in virtue and honor, or a Loco-Foco listen to reason. Vainly did I "remonstrate" with him *more Hibernico*, first with the butt-end of my whip and afterwards with my boots: it was an utterly fruitless expenditure of leather.

"Well," said I at last, "if Mahomet won't go to the mountain the mountain must come to Mahomet;" so we laid hands on the buggy and dragged it bodily up to the horse; then, having tied up the traces *ἀνωσγέτως* (which may here be translated for the benefit of those not '*curiously learned*,' "with an old suspender") we each took one side of his head and, by a great triumph of art, coached him over the remaining mile. And thus we made our entry into Tadcaster at 10 A. M., Sunday morning.

Almost every one was at church, and we led along our goodly steed nearly five minutes, through a not very promising street, without discerning, as Pat says, "ere a Christian, not aiven a pig, shure." At the end of that time we became aware of a large bundle of pots coming down upon us at the rate of six miles an hour, and as the ambulatory mass of pewter drew nigher we distinguished a small boy in the centre of it.

"I say, boy!"

"Zurr!" and the pot-boy pulled up in about as much time as it would have taken a locomotive to perform the same feat.

"Where does this road go?"

"It goa boath ways, zur, it do."

"And that one?"

"That doan't go nowhere, zur."

"H—m—m. Any inn here?"

"Yes, zur, there be the Roizin Zun, and the Zwan wi' one neck, you know, and the Zwan wi' two necks."

"And which is the best?"

"Whoy, zur, feyther he loikes the Zwan wi' two necks: Oi belongs to the Roizin Zun mysel! Vera good tap the Zun, zur."

"Well, which is the way to the Sun?"



Memory and imagination are equally incompetent to convey an adumbration of the bewildering answer we received, compared with which the celebrated Dutch direction, "First you must go up a high hill, and then down a low hill," &c., was a very model of lucidness. We looked dubiously at the boy, the horse, and each other.

"What's to be done, Peters?"

Fred replied by warbling a stave of "the Pilot:"

"Fear not, but troost in Pro-o-o-vidence,  
Where'er thou chawnce to be."

"Here's a penny for you, my lad. Be a good boy, and go to church. Come up, Bucephalus!"

*Fortes fortuna.* After ten minutes eccentric perambulation we brought up opposite the door of the Rising Sun.

"Hillo, house! hillo!"

But the house didn't feel itself called on to answer.

"Hillo-o! Anybody in?"

"Neigh!" quoth a horse somewhere, (not our horse; he wouldn't deign to do anything of the sort.)

Troy'em again, Benson! Giv'em an Indian whoop, now!

So I gave them a pretty good imitation of one, which had the desired effect, for there emerged from the stable a ponderous hostler, with a red waistcoat, red cravat, red hair and unutterably red face. I thought it must be the rising sun himself put into knee-breeches for the occasion.

"Can we have a horse and chaise here to go on to York?"

"O, ye be goaing further zur, be ye?"

"Yes! Put up that horse and take care of him — he's thorough-bred."

"Aw! indeed! Oi should na ha' thought it from the look of him." And the canny Yorkshireman scanned at a rapid glance the points of our impracticable.

"Well, he *is*. A valuable animal that. Take *good* care of him, and mind! Don't you get behind him. He kicks."

This was said quite at random, but it proved too true in the end.

#### FYTTE THE THIRD.

"What a glorious cathedral, Fred! and what chaunting! It's a pity we were so late."

"Oi'm thinking we wur in toime for the best of it."

"I wish we could import such a building our way. Strikes me it would benefit our utilitarians a trifle."

"Ye may say that, mon."



"Tall half-and-half that was at the Queen's Head!"

"And the cheese not small nayther."

"What a nice little horse this is! (we were inspired by John Barlycorn, and in very good humor with everything.) If we only had him to take us all the way to Leeds!"

"Moy heart quails just to think o' droiving that other one."

"Well, you must summon up your fiftytude, as Pat says, for here's Tadcaster; (ke-ip! pay along pony!) and here's the Rising Sun, *as large as life and twice as natural*. How's the thoroughbred, hostler?"

"He's doin' vera well, zur."

"He must be turning over a new leaf then (*sotto voce*.) \* And the buggy?"

"All roight, zur."

We paid our shot, and bestowed a munificent largess on our rubicund friend. "Now, Peters, we must have a division of labor. Do you take the whip and I'll see to thereins."

Fred looked as if he thought the division hardly a fair one to himself. Never was man more mistaken. Hardly had I gathered up the ribbons when our horse, always in extremes, like a modern reformer, dashed off at four minute pace, pulling in a way that threatened to haul me straight over the dash-board. For thirteen miles we scarcely spoke a word. The state of things seemed too good to be true. I twisted the reins round my hand and held well on, giving vent to an occasional yell as the pace exhilarated me; Peters smoked a Principe in satisfied silence. At the thirteenth milestone I began to tremble, fearing that this might be the precise amount of which our animal was capable. But again we were agreeably disappointed. On he flew with undiminished speed, and merrily we dashed into Leeds, just as they were lighting the lamps.

"Through many a startled *suburb*

Thundered his flying feet;

He rushed into the goodly town,

He rushed up the long white" —

no, not "white," but particularly black and dirty street in which the York road terminated; and we auspicated our entry by pulverizing a donkey-cart which wouldn't clear the track. *Both* donkeys, so far as our comet-like velocity permitted us to observe, escaped unhurt, but the



cart must have been past carpentry. "Coom out o' way, Tammy, or thee'll be run over!" I felt a slight jar; it was caused by our off hind hub knocking over a small child, who continued a rotary motion for some seconds, and finally disappeared down a yawning cellar. Humanity prompted us to stop, but you might as well have tried to pull up the black horse that carried off Lenore. Nor indeed, if feasible, would such a proceeding have been safe, for when the unmanageable *was* once stopped, not Horace Greeley himself could set him going again.

The long narrow street down which we had been locomoting, crossed at right angles a long wide one — the main street of Leeds. On the right, lay the Albion Hotel, our quarters; I had a shrewd suspicion that our steed's lay on the left. Anticipating a fearful struggle, I gradually eased out the nigh rein as we approached the critical corner and tightened my pull on the off one correspondingly. Peters, who saw what was passing in my mind, just at the decisive moment, seized my wrist with one of his hands and the rein with the other; so that our combined energies were directing the vehicle eastward. "All this, it is hardly necessary," &c., "passed in a less time," &c., &c., as Mr. James would say.

"A body acted upon by two forces will proceed in a line between them," (*vide* Whistle's Mechanical Algebra, some page or other.) Agreeably to this fundamental law, horse and buggy continued a straight-forward course, which there was nothing to prevent their doing indefinitely except a few houses. One half-second more, and we should have been in a linen-draper's shop — when as if restored to partial sanity, rowdy brought up with miraculous suddenness. The velocity which had been regularly distributed through his limbs, was instantly transferred, as by magic, to his hind quarters. Elevating his heels to an extent that was more amusing to those around, than comfortable to those behind him, he broke one trace and both shafts, and entirely dissipated the dashboard. "*Pactoque hoc sine quievit*," like Pious Æneas.

I shied the reins right and left over the horse's neck, and jumped out on the causeway (*Americance* side-walk.)

"Where ye goaing?" quo' Peters.

"I'm going up to the Albion; you may do as you like."

"And leave the horse standing here?"



In reply, I expressed a wish that the animal might stand there as long as was convenient to him, and undergo a much more unpleasant operation afterwards. Having thus relieved my injured feelings, I was proceeding to crowd all sail for the Albion, when a stout lad came to the rescue.

"Pleaze, zur, Oi knows t' auld horse."

"Oh, you do know him? well, I wish you joy of your acquaintance."

"B'longs t' auld Measter Stoiles, zur. Shall Oi tawk him whoam?"

"Yes, take him away, and tell Mr. Styles to send in his bill and —." It is unnecessary to repeat the conclusion of the sentence. Persons who are much excited sometimes talk inconsiderately.

"Aw, never fear, zur, t' auld gentleman 'll zend 'um in fast enough."

#### FYTTE THE FOURTH.

Next morning between the first egg and the second cup of tea, a small document was handed to me. I glanced at it, and handed it over to Peters, who read as follows:

"Leeds, July 2, 1843.

— Benson, Esq., to Ralph Styles, Dr.,

To horse and chaise to Tadcaster, . . . L. 1    0    0

To breakage and damage of horse, . . . L. 1    10    0

L. 2    10    0

Received payment."

"Dear droive, rayther!"

"Wait a minute, Fred, my boy, till you see the other side of the ledger. Waiter! Pen, ink *and* paper!"

The stationary was brought. "What be that you're wroitin', Carl?"

"Read it, Fred;" and Peters read.

"Leeds, July 2, 1843.

Ralph Styles, to Carl Benson, Dr. to

Surgeon's bill for damages inflicted

by his horse, . . . . . L. 3    3    0

Per Contra,

By bill delivered, . . . . . L. 2    10    0

Balance due Mr. Benson. . . . . L. 0    13    0

Rec'd payment."



My Pylades looked half a dozen notes of interrogation. I rose and limped across the room.

"What is the matter wi' you?"

"Am I *very* lame, Fred?"

"Awful!"

"That'll do then." I inquired of the porter Mr. Styles' locality, and having ascertained that it was not farther off than a cripple might manage to hobble, gradually worked my way thither. In a small office sat a large man of the ordinary Yorkshire type. "Zurvant, zur," said he, as I entered with an emphatic limp, and a ferocious aspect.

"Are you Mr. Ralph Styles? Because, if you are, here's your bill — and here's mine."

"Aw! you be the chap that had my horse yesterday, be you?"

"I am that unfortunate man. (O-oh! my leg!)"

"Noice job you made of it. T' horse has the heavens."

"Has the heavens, has he? I'm glad of it, (*crescendo*.) I hope he'll get the bots and a few more nice little complaints. I wish that horse was dead!" And down came my fist on the desk, nearly knocking the inkstand up into Mr. Style's nose. "O-oh! my leg, again!" and I stooped down to rub the member in question.

"Zure, zur, I hope ye be na vera mooch hoort." Styles looked rather alarmed.

"I *am* very much hurt; shan't be able to attend to business properly for three months, However, I won't say anything about that, but if you don't pay my doctor's bill, I'll have satisfaction of you — if there's any law in the land, that is. I'll teach you to give two quiet young gentlemen such a horse as that." And very quiet this young gentleman looked.

"Now, zur, Oi wants to do what's faier mysel, I does, but you caun't expect me in faierness to pay your doctor's bill. But Oi'll tell you what Oi *will* do. Pay me hauf o' moy bill and we'll be quits."

"Ah, you mean to say that you'll take off half of your bill, if I take off half of mine, which leaves" —

"Na, Oi did na zay that, zur, Oi'll tawk off hauf o' moine and zay nothink about yourn, ye know."

"H—em—em!" I leaned on the desk a few seconds in a thoughtful attitude. "I don't want to go to law



about a trifle. You mean to say that you'll take off half of your bill and receipt it in full, if I say nothing about mine?"

"Zactly zo, sur."

"Here it is then!" and I planked a sovereign and two half crowns, while Mr. S. on his part made his original performance complete by adding to it the magic words "Ralph Styles." And never had two words a more magic effect, for no sooner was the exchange made, and the important scrap of paper safely pocketed, than I cut an exuberant pigeonwing, and followed it up by shooting across the little room at one *glissade*.

It's astonishing how much better my leg feels," and I let off a few more capers. Styles looked on with a very puzzled expression. "Oi doan't understand this," said he at length, "pray, zur, be ye hurt, or be ye not?"

"I'm *not* hurt," said I, "thank Providence, and no thanks to your horse. But let this be a warning to you how you put that brute before a Christian again, or there'll be manslaughter some day."

The Yorkshireman was utterly dumbfounded. My coolness had stumped him completely. For at least three minutes he gazed at me, open-eyed and open-mouthed. Then broke forth, spite of himself, this most unwilling and mortifying confession, "Well, I be done!"

And so is

CARL BENSON.

## POOR OLD CHARLEY.

Knickerbocker, July 1858.

CLARA rushed into my room, her fair hair floating down her shoulders, her little feet in slippers, and her dressing-gown wrapped hastily round her little figure.

"What is it?" I asked, starting half conscious out of a heavy, summer-morning sleep, with a dim fear that the baby might be ill or the house on fire.

"One of the horses is dead! it must be Charley! They brought him out of the stable just now, and he laid himself down and died."



I tumbled up somehow and ran to the window. Of course my room commanded the stable-yard, but one horse-chestnut, of untimely luxuriance, had popped a big leafy bough just between my point of vision and the spot where the unfortunate deceased lay, so that I could barely discern two hoofs and a nose. With a speed that emulated my muchabhorred and shudderingly-remembered New-Heaven toilettes, (in those dreary college-days when we had fifteen minutes to dress in, without light or fire, on a New-England winter-morning, the thermometer as low down as it could go,) I sprang into the nearest habiliments, precipitated myself down stairs, and appeared upon the scene. Yes, there he lay, poor old Charley, fearfully swollen, (it was inflammation of the lungs, so far as our veterinary knowledge enabled us to judge;) around his half-open mouth were some dark stains of the grass, where Tom had been trying to bleed him: it was no use.

'He seemed all right last night, Sir,' said the groom: (that I knew myself, having seen him at seven.) 'This morning, when I took him out, he rolled right over, and choked, and swelled, and died in a minute, as you may say. And,' continued Tom, as he saw me regarding the body with a puzzled air, 'I sent Mike off for old Cæsar to come and bury him.'

I returned to the house, performed my matutinal ablutions, and went through the ceremony of breakfast, unsentimental as it may seem under the circumstances; then moved back to the stable-yard, and arrived there just as old Cæsar drove in.

Such an apparition I never saw before or since. Imagine a man very short and thick-set, any age you please on the *grave* side of seventy, but strong and active notwithstanding; a grizzly black face; grizzly white hair and whiskers; long, knotty, prehensile hands, and nails like claws; a hat that resembled a fragment of a very rusty and battered stove-pipe; and clothes — they really knock the spots out of my poor pen, so far as doing them justice is concerned. Such variety of wretchedness! They were more like the mysteriously-united collections of rags one reads of in the sketches of Irish travellers, than any thing ever seen in an Anglo-Saxon community. That his cart might not have been painted at some remote era, I will not make bold to affirm; but if it ever



And been overlaid with color, time, weather, and filth had long since rendered that color indistinguishable; a general hue of mud pervaded the establishment. The horse was worthy of the chariot and charioteer: a mere pony in height, of a flea-bitten gray, turned rusty by exposure to the elements. Every rib and bony angle protruded through his frame-work of skin; every joint was swollen to twice its natural size. He had no more tail than a Manx cat; and his head was absolutely fixed between his fore-legs, as if the muscles which raise the neck had lost their power. That old horse alone, if turned out in a conspicuous position, would have been enough to infect a whole landscape with an air of desolation.

As I looked at Cæsar and his fortunes, he seemed to me some evil spirit or gnome, come to snatch away the remains of my poor favorite; a Charon in a cart instead of a boat, who was to bear off Charley to some fearful region where dead horses go. At length I found voice, and demanded his intentions respecting the corpse.

'We used to throw 'em into the river,' said Cæsar, (it was extraordinary to hear him talk like an ordinary person; he ought to have spoken some unnatural jargon, I thought,) 'but the Corporation won't let us now, so we take 'em somewhere and bury 'em.'

It was said that Cæsar had a peculiar style of burying his subjects; that, in short, he was a Gothamite representative of the European knacker; boiled up the unhappy beasts; made glue and dogs' meat of them; sausages, probably, to some extent — perhaps ate them himself. My resolution was taken on the spot.

'Friend Cæsar,' said I, 'I would n't have Charley thrown overboard if the Corporation asked me to. You shall bury him, but you need not take him any farther than the orchard. We will put him there; he may improve the apple-trees; I understand they put dead cats into grapevine beds sometimes.'

'And sure,' put in Tom with a smile of approbation, 'he was a good horse in his time, and deserves decent burial all the same as a Christian.'

(*Christian*, as above used, means merely *human being*, or one of the genus *homo*. It is not solely an Hibernicism, but an English provincialism also, and as such has



attracted notice in the erudite pages of the discriminating Mr. Punch:

'The ass he drinks water, and likewise the cow, \*  
But none but a *Christian* takes beer, you'll allow.'

Tom was not uncommonly popular, notwithstanding his professional merits. Indeed, he was something of a misanthropist, and a good deal of a misogynist, (I wonder what he would say if heard me calling him such awful names?) but for the noble animal he cherished a tender affection and consideration. Once, when Billy, the cart-horse, had an internal inflammation which I, in my pride of veterinary knowledge, took for the bots, and accordingly 'exhibited' some whiskey and red pepper, which very nearly did his business for him, Tom, at the first symptoms of peril, dashed off on a run to the farrier's, just three miles off, without waiting for orders; and when some of the servants afterwards bantered him on his earnestness, he only condescended to allude to his having been sent for the doctor in similar haste one night when the cook was ill, adding, by way of conclusive explanation, that 'a sick horse needed a doctor as much as any Christian.'

We prepared to put Charley on the antediluvian cart. One is accustomed to think of a dead body as easy to handle; easier, at least, than a living one; but I never saw such a specimen of passive resistance as he afforded. We might have carried three live horses, slung them on board a ship, or tied them under Poitevin's balloon, more easily than we disposed of that dead horse. I thought first that we should never have him lifted, and then that we should never have him perfectly balanced on the cart. Tom and Mike were not sufficient aid; we had to call in the gardener and his helper to our assistance. At length, by the united efforts of all six of us, the now wooden and angular form of the once lightning-footed and pliable-limbed stepper was adjusted on its homely hearse. Then followed another marvel: how was that dilapidated, spectral pony to draw three times his own weight, and up hill, too, for the ground rose to the orchard? Yet draw it he did, and at something approaching to a trot.

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\* Or as it might be altered to suit our meridian,  
'The Greeley drinks water and likewise the Dow.'



'I had noticed from the beginning of the proceedings that all the servants treated Cæsar with a respect which a white man — particularly a white of the lower orders, and most particularly an Irishman — rarely exhibits toward a 'gentleman of color.' This unusual deference was so marked that I observed it from the moment of his entry on the premises; and my first impulse was to attribute it to superstitious fear — not so bad a guess, either, for even a well-educated man, if his imagination were at all susceptible, might well be excused for standing in some awe of such a hobgoblin concern as Cæsar and his equipage. But this was not the real reason; I was now to learn it.

'Did you notice the cart, Sir?' asked Tom, dropping his voice to an earnest whisper as we brought up the rear of the sad procession.

'Yes, indeed.'

'You would n't give a dollar for it, would you?'

'Not for horse and all.'

'Sir-r!' throwing all the impressiveness he could into his tone, 'that man's worth twenty thousand dollars this day!'

The milk in the cocoa-nut was accounted for. Subsequent inquiry confirmed the correctness of Tom's information, save only the usual exaggeration of the amount. This half-scarecrow, half-gnome to behold, this patched and shredded knacker, was the actual possessor of twelve thousand dollars in bank-stock, besides having educated his children and set them up in some respectable business.

We chose the spot for Charley's sepulture between two of the largest and finest apple-trees. Cæsar demanded three spades, and asked the two helpers to stay and assist him. The gardener hurried off for the utensils, and the other men made no objections to working under orders of a 'nigger.' Such is the magic power of wealth to confer respectability. So it is all arranged now. I sit down on the grass to watch the operation and smoke — not a cigar, but a goodly clay pipe, such as a Knickerbocker who is proud to be a member of the St. Nicholas ought to smoke. Baby — so long as there is but one, he is always the baby — comes tumbling out of doors to see what papa is about, and what they are going to do with poor Charley.



It is his first acquaintance with death. The sun is growing warm, but we have plenty of shade here, and are never breezeless.

And this is the end of our seven years' friendship! for friendship it really was. I believe we understood each other like two Christians, as Tom would say. I have had a great many two-legged friends — at least they called themselves such — in those seven years, not half so true to me as Charley. Once he gave me a fright, but that was not his fault; my own, if any one's. On the whole, I don't think I have one unpleasant recollection connected with him, but a great many very pleasant ones.

The way I came to make Charley's acquaintance was this: walking down Wall-street one fine spring day, I saw that Charley Losing was crossing over to speak to me about a horse. I say *about a horse*, for that followed of course from the fact of his speaking to me. At that time we were humble units of Young America, and Young America must do one of two things — dance or drive trotters. Losing and I came under the latter category. We knew all the calendars in the *Spirit of the Times*, so that we could have stood an examination on them, and used to voyage all over the country to see matches and try promising colts, just as an Irish gentleman (according to Thackeray) goes sixty miles *on business*, i. e., to look at a pointer.

'Good-morning,' said Losing: 'how much do you weigh?

I stated the usual amount of my material ponderosity.

'Just mine exactly:' and then he related to me succinctly (for he never had the national proclivity to word-wasting) that he had matched his bay horse Charley to trot against a team, two in a wagon, two miles of turn-pike, for two hundred dollars, (here I put in, 'Why, you're quite in the doo-all,' but Losing treated the shocking attempt at a pun quite right by taking no notice of it,) and that he wanted a man of his own weight to sit with him. He had found the right passenger.

Just a fortnight from that time, I underwent the disagreeable operation of crossing the Brooklyn ferry, and soon after found myself travelling down to the scene of action behind Charley Losing's fast team, the dun horse and black mare that every one on the island knew. I had supposed our rendezvous would be Langshaw's, which used to be the great place of meeting for such affairs in



those days, but Losing and Mr. Langshaw did n't hitch horses any longer. Said Langshaw had good liquor and a miraculous cook, but in his other ways was one of those landlords who are now happily getting to be matter of history, at least in the more civilized parts of our country. He fed his guests and boarders three times a day by the clock, and it would have taken a very keen man to get so much as a piece of bread and cheese at any other hour, unless indeed you ordered a dinner or supper three days ahead. Mrs. L. was ten times worse in this respect than her husband. One afternoon, Losing, coming along from some sporting excursion, desperately tired, and hungry enough to eat a cat without stopping to cut the claws off, pulled up at Langshaw's, and requested some provender. Mr. Langshaw was out, and Mrs. Langshaw, utterly deaf to Charley's hints of some cold beef which he had caught a glimpse of in a closet, insisted that there was nothing to eat in the house, and that nothing could be prepared in less than two hours. Whereupon, Losing, being prevented by the laws of gallantry and the land from pitching into a female woman, pitched himself into his wagon, pelted home at such a rate that he knocked two shoes off his horse and lamed him for a week; and on his arrival, after filling his vacuum with the first comestible he could lay hands on, (which chanced to be a whole apple-pie,) poured out a pretty stiff horn of cognac, and took a solemn vow over it that he would never tie his trotters under Langshaw's shed again. And Charley Losing was a man of his word.

Accordingly we were to meet at a small tavern near Langshaw's, but on the opposite side of the road. It professed to call itself the *Mechanic's Retreat*, and hung out a sign to that effect; but the local artist not being very strong in punctuation, had substituted for the apostrophe *above* the final *s*, a comma *below* it, so that the *Mechanics, Retreat* read more like a repulse than a invitation. It was a fine day, and the performances had attracted a pretty large crowd. The bar-room and stoop overflowed with sporting characters, and the adjacent sheds were thickly planted with wagons. The team had not arrived at the appointed hour, which did not surprise us; *some body* always is late on these occasions; as we were not, it was only to be expected that the other party



would be. Losing didn't care; his horse, carefully sheeted, was walking up and down before one of his numerous wagons, under the guidance of Scipio Africanus, who knew as much of things equine as his master, and that is saying not a little. For himself, he sedulously abstained from all beverages, though there was much liquoring going on in and about the *Mechanics*, *Retreat*, and we received numerous invitations; nor did he light a single cigar; we strolled about, looking at this and that horse, and winding up with Charley himself, who was not a large or showy animal, perhaps it might be said, not a handsome one, but had splendid points to the eye of a connoisseur. And Losing told me when and where and for how much he had bought the horse, and all the particulars of his training and performances up to his present age of eight years; thence he digressed to the wagon, and gave me much information how and by whom a wagon should be built, all which I listened to with as much interest as Miss Anybody would manifest at an account of the last new fashions in Paris or Grace Church.

Finally, after a considerable lapse of time, arrived, not the team, but its proprietor. One of his nags had cast a shoe that very morning, and was lame, so he came to pay forfeit. Losing having received the money — you could not tell from his face whether he was satisfied or disappointed at this abrupt termination of the performances — walked solemnly into the bar-room, and there made up for lost time in a way that created a visible respect for him among the circumjacent loafers. Then he proposed to me that, as I had never travelled behind Charley, we should go home with him, which we accordingly did. After having smoked his second cigar, Losing, seeing that I was pleased with his pet's travelling, advanced another proposition.

'I am going over the pond,' said he, meaning thereby the Atlantic, 'and don't know when I shall come back. My brother Fred has bought the team, and Harrison is going to take Screwdriver; now you had better buy Charley — I know you want a horse — and that will just set me free.'

We bargained a little for form's sake, and to keep our hand in; finally I bought Charley for four hundred and fifty dollars, and it was a good investment.



The sun is growing warmer. Come into the shade, Franky! They have not finished digging yet. I had no idea it took so large a hole to put the poor old horse in.

Charley soon became my pet, and with reason, for every one allowed him to be a most valuable animal. True, there were a good many nags about that could beat him on a brush, but for long drives he had few equals; and those were the drives I liked, living so far from the city, and going to and fro continually, to say nothing of numerous ferry-crossings eastward. There was no give-out about that little bay; he was always ready for his work. Many a pleasant spin of from eight to fourteen miles I had with him, sometimes on the Westchester road and the avenue, sometimes on the island. After travelling far enough to tire an ordinary horse, he was just in trim to begin trotting his fastest, so that now and then he would astonish a fancy-man who had been regarding him as merely an average roadster. One afternoon I remember particularly as if it were but yesterday. At that time I was having a passage-of-arms with the great *North American Blunderbuss*, and wanting to consult some erudite folio, drove down to Harry Masters' after it. A lovely spring afternoon it was, such as we seldom, too seldom enjoy in our rapid country, where spring *will* glide into summer before the winter is fairly gone. So fresh was the landscape, so genial and Italian-like the atmosphere, that mere existence was a positive luxury. And as Charley bowled along, up-hill and down-hill, over bridges and past taverns, at his easy journey-pace of twelve miles an hour, (for he never was one of your disagreeable brutes, that have no medium between a walk and full speed,) I felt inexpressibly comfortable, and in first-rate condition for pitching into the *Blunderbuss*. On the whole, it is just possible that my whole turnout added to the cheerfulness of the scene. Charley had a new harness on that fitted like wax, and his owner was adorned with a new white hat; the wagon had just been varnished, and in the strap of the seat alongside me was stuck a jolly posy from our own garden, which I was taking in for Mrs. Masters. Just about a mile from the stones, (it was in the early part of the afternoon, while the road was as yet tolerably clear, and most of those who were out went the other way.) the



sharp quick sounds of pattering feet struck my ear. A well-built iron-gray was brushing up behind me in a road-sulky. On ordinary occasions I should not have ventured to risk the difference of weight after coming such a distance, but Charley and I both felt so gay, and he looked so ready for a start as he pricked up his ears at the sound of approaching wheels, that just as the gray had his nose almost over my shoulder, and was about to turn out and pass, I gathered in the reins a little, and told my pet to go. Away he sweeps in his beautiful round trot, pitching back a cloud of dust and pebbles upon the astonished sulky. The gray tries to follow; for a few steps he holds his own in the rear, then the sound of his feet grows fainter in the distance, dying away in a canter. I pull up Charley a little carelessly; he breaks from being too suddenly checked, and comes almost to a full stop. Just as I start him again, the gray, who has meantime settled, comes flying by at a great pace. But Charley is at his heels in a moment; he presses him close, and is just lapping, when a sudden jolt sends the whip flying out of its socket. There is nothing to be done but pull up and put back. A benevolent Hibernian has picked up the article, and hands it to me. This time I keep fast hold of it. Our friend with the gray has drawn up, and is waiting. All right! you won't have to wait long. Go it, Charley! Just as we are at his wheel, off goes the gray at his best. One on each side of the road, we tear along. It is a dead level, and rather heavy. Charley with so much weight against him, can't make up that length, for all my coaxing. The gray is going his prettiest, under a tremendous pull. I jerk Charley upon the centre of the road, at the risk of splitting a hoof; he skims the hard Macadam with redoubled velocity, and gains on his antagonist. 'Go it, mustaches!' cries a small boy, as we pass. Flop! the gray is up. His driver makes a vain effort to catch him into his trot. It's no use; the wagon goes by like a whirlwind, and leaves him so far behind, that he gives up all farther effort. Then I strike the stones, and draw up to a walk; and as the sulky comes slowly trotting along, I remark quite casually to the discomfited jockey, 'I guess your horse has n't been nine miles with four hundred pounds behind him.'



Here I can fancy the lady-reader (if indeed any lady-reader should have gone so far into poor Charley's fragmentary biography) ejaculating, 'What, nothing but horses and racing!' and then passing contemptuously to the next article. Stay awhile, fair dame or gentle damosel. Hath not the noble animal ever played a great part in poetry and romance, from Roderick's Orelia (to go back no farther) down to the charger that carried off the Duchess May and her lover?

'When the bride-groom let the flight on his red roan steed  
of might,  
And the bride lay on his arm, safe, as if she felt no harm,  
Smiling out into the night?'

Well now, suppose I show you how Charley assisted in an authentic bit of romance, with a happy termination too; how he restored a disconsolate wife to the arms of an unsuspecting husband. List, then, and be moved.

One summer, I was staying up the river, at Phil. Van Horne's, and, being bound to stay a great part of the summer, had come with all my family, Charley included. Among our neighbors was one who dwelt somewhat farther inland than most of us; an old gentleman named Hertezoff, of Russian descent originally, as the termination of his name implies. A very nice old gentleman he was, though we used to think he might have lived a little nearer to the Hudson without any danger to it from his proximity. But you can't expect people to have every thing, and *looks* were the forte of the family. Miss Hertezoff was a real American beauty, neither a blonde, nor a brunette, nor yet a compromise between the two, but a union of the best points of each; skin marble-white, hair and eyes dark brown, cheeks lit up with roses, and so forth. As to her accomplishments and mental furniture, I never had an opportunity of studying them, for she was very much taken up elsewhere; but believe she had, at least, the usual amount of feminine graces and perfections.

About that time came into those parts a stranger who was immediately allowed to be 'some pumpkins,' inasmuch as he was a southerner, rich, young and handsome. His name was Sinclair Preston; he came from Mississippi, where he owned one estate, besides another in Louisiana. He really was a fine-looking fellow, tall,



fresh-complexioned and regularly-featured, with most aristocratic hands and feet; and knew enough to eschew all loud patterns, and dress very quietly. Not to go into particulars, he 'knocked' all the adjacent male population, native and imported, in the matter of looks, and would have made us all very envious, if the lords of creation ever *were* envious of such things; but I believe that is a privilege of the other sex. Moreover, he was, for a southerner, marvellously quiet and undemonstrative. He did not get drunk, rarely swore, and, *mirabile dictu*, never gambled. Nay, more; he always paid his debts when asked, even if they were *not* debts of honor; and was so disgusted when his state repudiated, that *he* repudiated *it*, and ever after called himself a Louisianian. Farther, he had a good education, and did not put 'sir' or 'ma'am' more than half a dozen times into every sentence he uttered. In short, he was a paragon of social virtues — but for one unlucky failing. Sinclair Preston was the most forgetful and scatterbrained of men. He was exactly the sort of person to whom the old woman's saying applies: 'If your head were loose, you would forget it.' To make an appointment with him was a farce. If you asked him to dinner a week a-head, and sent him a reminder the day before, it was two to one he never came after all. If he was going on an excursion, and there was no kind friend at hand to jog his memory, he was sure to be wandering somewhere else when the boat started. There was no counting on any of his movements with the most distant approach to certainty.

The rich young southerner having come to our locality, fell in love, according to rule, with the prettiest girl there, which Mary Hertezoff as decidedly was, as Sinclair was the handsomest man. They were engaged very soon after their first acquaintance, and married very soon after their engagement. I am sure the whole affair did not occupy two months. They had a gay wedding one night, and were to start next day on a southern tour. When I say they had a gay wedding, I am not using the adjective at random, or for merely ornamental purposes. It *was* a gay wedding, a very gay one; perhaps a New-Englander might have called it too gay. Hertezoff had some old Madeira, and the guests knew where it was. I remember that Harry Masters, who tried to steer



his household home that night with a four-in-hand, could n't keep in the middle of the turnpike, (which is about as wide as the Third Avenue,) but ran into the ditch, and broke his pole. To be sure, Harry had the excuse of its being a very dusty and windy night, (more by token, as Pat says, I lost a hat of my own on the same occasion,) but some said he was more in the wind than the state of the weather alone could account for. However, my host and I were up in good time next morning, for it would have been a positive sin to lie in bed such mornings as we had. While Phil. and I were running extempore races round the grounds — one of our usual morning amusements, and a very good way of getting up an appetite for breakfast — a boy came along with some game. We were none of us ardent sportsmen, and should have been very badly off for the article, had we depended on our own exertions for the supply of it; indeed, game was scarce any how, and it was not often that any one in the vicinity had a good lot at a time. So Phil. was glad enough to buy all that the boy had, and then, like a kind, thoughtful, neighborly fellow as he was, he recollected that Hertezoff was very fond of partridges. 'Frank,' said he, 'will you drive down after breakfast, and take these to the old gentleman, with my compliments?' Phil. knew that I was too happy to have any excuse for driving about the country.

Mr. Hertezoff lived not many miles from us, but a pretty good way — that is to say, a pretty bad way — from the steam-boat landing at Vienna. I found his front gate open, and, bowling unceremoniously into it, nearly ran over old Sarah, the cook, who was holding an animated conversation with another servant in the very centre of the lane.

'Something for you,' said I, pointing to the plumb birds at my feet.

'Ah! it's little we care for them now,' she replied, regarding the lovely animals with a look of indifference that, in a cook, was positive impiety.

'Why, what in goodness' name is the matter?' Her bewildered look, which I at first attributed to her narrow escape from pulverization under Charley's hoofs, had evidently some more permanent cause.

'O Sir, Mr. Preston's been and gone, and forgot Mrs. Preston.'



It was so very absurd, and yet so like the man, that I could with difficulty suppress a roar of laughter.

'Yes,' she continued, 'he took the rockaway and the team this morning,' (the Hertezoffs were not so flush of horses and vehicles as some of us; their establishment was always denoted by the singular number and definite article,) 'and all his things, and some o' hern. I wonder Jake was such a fool as to go with him. And they did n't find it out for nigh half an hour, and now they're ravin' distracted; and Sam has gone off on old Ploughboy, but he'll never catch 'em.'

I thought it highly probable not, from my own recollections of Ploughboy, the farm-horse; but at any rate there appeared no use for me in the present state of things; and doubtless I should have gone straight back, but the Hertezoff grounds were so arranged that you could not turn conveniently without driving round the house; so round the house I drove, and at the farther corner of it a ludicrously pitiable spectacle presented itself. The bride, all equipped in her travelling-dress, and looking none the less beautiful for her consternation, was walking, or rather trotting, round the broad stoop that encompassed the house, as if performing some charm to restore

'Her Daphnis to her much-desiring arms.'

In a rocking-chair near the door sat her father, on one side of him a pile of band-boxes, on the other his half-smoked cigar, which had fallen helplessly to the floor. He was rocking as fast as his daughter was running, and every time she passed him in her round, he would lift up his eyes and hands, and exclaim: 'My poor, forsaken child: what is to become of you?'

I checked my horse instinctively. A thought struck me. The landing was seventeen miles off, or a short eighteen at most. The *Swallow* usually arrived there at eleven. I glanced at my watch; it was not yet ten. We had an hour and fourteen minutes.

'Mrs. Preston, I will take you to the boat in time.'

'Can you?' and she stopped short in her career.

'Yes; but you must leave your baggage.'

She glanced at the band-boxes, and hesitated a moment; then, just as I had lightened my vehicle, by pitching out the birds almost into Hertezoff's lap, she leaped into



the wagon without waiting for me to bias the front axle and make room for her.

'Hold fast, Mrs. Preston. Partridges, with Mr. Van Horne's compliments. Ke-ip, Charley! Good-bye, Mr. Hertezoff!' and away we rattled down the lane and out at the gate, leaving the old gentleman more bewildered than ever; his daughter whisked away, he had hardly time to see by whom, and three brace of birds left in exchange for her.

Though our road descended most of the way, (else would our chance have been small indeed,) it rose at first, soon after emerging from the Hertezoff place, for nearly a mile, and pretty stiffly too. To press the horse up this hill would have been suicidal; we were obliged to mount at any easy pace. By way of keeping up my companion's spirits during this delay, I extemporized some most apocryphal stories of my nag's performances against time. Heaven forgive me for Munchausenizing! I am not sure but I made Charley distance Trustee in a ten-mile heat. However, this romance served to keep Mrs. Preston quiet till we had climbed the ascent. A lovely view it was from the top, and a lovely day to see it in. Every variety of hill and valley and wood and water in sight; and far away below, the blue Hudson and the white sails gliding over it; and far away above, the blue sky and the white clouds sailing on it. But I had no eyes save for my horse's ears and the road straight before me. Straight enough it lay, descending for miles, the few occasional elevations being not more than the velocity due to the previous descent would carry us over without trouble. I drew up the reins: 'Hold fast, Mrs. Preston; don't mind the dust. Ke-ip, Charley!' The gallant bay made a hop forward, and then took hold of the bit and settled down to a tearing trot, making the dust eddy and the pebbles spin around us. 'He-e, boy! g'lang!' and away goes Charley!

And first we overtook the hopeless messenger. Sam, a diminutive black, was bobbing up and down on big Ploughboy at a hobby-horse canter. We shot by him like a steamer past a liner when there is no wind, and my hind-wheel nearly took off the top of one of his boots. Whether he saw that his services were no longer needed, I do 'nt know, for he was instantly lost to sight in our



self-raised cloud of dust. 'He-e, boy! he-eh!' and away goes Charley!

What's this? A flock of geese spread over the road. We take no notice; Charley and I, but go right at them: Mrs. Preston cannot suppress a scream. I understand geese; I have seen a great many in Rhode Island, (no *arrière pensée* against the inhabitants of that good state, though they have adopted the M—e L—w;) it is a physical impossibility to run over them. Right and left they vanish, as by magic, from under our wheels, and the wagon speeds on smoothly without a jar. 'That's right; he-e, old fellow!' and away goes Charley?

Some minutes — that is to say, a mile or so — farther on, a huge haycart is drawn diagonally across the road, while the careless driver stands on one side of it, gossiping with a crony. 'Hey! Hallo there! Those men ought to hear us: I'm sure we make noise enough; but they won't take the trouble to. Ah, my fine fellows! We have n't driven on the Bloomingdale-road for nothing. We know where there is just room to get through, and where there is n't. There is just room on the right side, exactly where you are standing.' Without a moment's hesitation, we dash at the opening. Our wheels shave the ponderous orbs of the hay-cart, and the two natives, tardily bestirring themselves to escape Charley's onslaught, are precipitated into the ditch. We hear the beginning of some tall swearing behind us, but the half-formed anathemas die away on the breeze. 'All right; get along!' and away goes Charley!

The pace continued so good that I began to be afraid, not that we should miss the boat, but (a more important loss to me) that I should kill my horse. To be sure, I had once performed a similar feat, about the same amount of road in the same time, with a mare belonging to old Bacchus. (It was to escape a thunder-shower when driving a young lady home from a dinner-party.) But Dolly never was altogether herself again after it, and Bacchus, who was then worth *only* one hundred and eighty thousand dollars a year, never forgave me for the injury done his property. Well, we are not so mean as Bacchus, thank God! and if Charley dies in a lady's service, his tomb shall be honored for it. Think of that, old fellow, and step



out more than ever. 'Hey, get along!' and away goes Charley!

*O gioja! potamos! potamos!* We are close on the river. Terribly blown, and puffing like a steam-engine, but with something left in him yet, Charley rushes into the little village of Vienna; (the smaller a place is in our state, the bigger name it is sure to have.) For the first time since starting, I dare look at my watch. Three minutes to spare! 'Hurrah! go it, old fellow! this is the last spirt.' Horse and man making noise enough to startle all the inhabitants, we rattle through the village slap to the end of the wharf. Just in time! The red flag is flying from the staff; the good boat Swallow is making her landing. The disembarking passengers have 'toted out their plunder,' and a goodly pile of trunks is going on board. Watching them and smoking a cigar, a tall gentleman leans against a post. It is Sinclair Preston.

'Hallo, Preston! here's your wife!' I shouted with such voice as I had left, for my throat was hoarse and dry between the dust that had gone into it and the yells that had come out of it. By way of supplementary emphasis, I nearly ran Charley's head into his face.

'By Jove!' ejaculated the Louisianian, stepping forward just in time to catch his bride as the jerk with which I pulled up threw her into his arms, 'I thought I had forgotten something.'

They have finished the grave and plumped the poor old horse into it. Franky has been scooping out a little grave with sticks in imitation. He has found a chicken's head, and is interring it with much care and ceremony. Dear Franky! how near we were both going to the grave together, though you never knew it, all by reason of Charley. No — let us be just to the departed; it was my fault more than his.

One fine April day — we lived in town then, and Franky was just beginning to talk — I took him and his nurse on a drive. We had a comfortable top-wagon — not exactly the thing to trot — and an old harness rather too light for the wagon. But not having the least intention to go fast, I started in the middle of the day, when the roads were empty. So we had a nice time of it till, as we were returning through Yorkville and climbing a hill, evil destiny sent a couple of b'hoys in a wagon behind



us. I heard them yelling, and drew Charley in, not without some demonstration of reluctance on his part. All would have been well, but as they passed us on the top of the hill, one of them made some contemptuous allusion to my horse. Piqued into a forgetfulness of prudence, I gave my pet his head, and started him down the descent. We were just lapping the other wagon when he broke. Vexed at the occurrence, I did not attempt to stop him until he had run past the b'hoys, and then tried to catch him into his trot. But the pull on the reins had no effect; he continued to gallop; and I then saw, to my consternation, that *his* breaking was only the consequence of the breaking of something else. The breeching flapped loose about his flanks. He could n't stop if he wanted to. And Franky, delighted at the rapid motion, claps his little hands in childish glee, and exclaims: 'We beat, papa! faster, faster!'

The old horse is going fast enough now. We spin through the village. My coach-maker is standing in front of his shop, gossiping with some neighbors. I hear him say, 'There's a runaway;' and another answer, 'Oh, he'll stop when he gets to the bottom of the hill.' It is an incident of great variety in their morning, a decided case of *suave mari magno*. How provokingly cool their observations sound!

Yes, *when* we get to the bottom! But what might happen in that half mile! The horse might kick or fall, and in either case we should be thrown in a heap together; or a wheel might come off, or a jolt upset us. One consolation — there was no fear of our running foul of another vehicle; the road lay perfectly open. After all, the greatest danger was that the nurse might be frightened, and attempt to jump out with the child. I dare not even say, 'Sit still, Jane; but changing the now useless reins into my right hand, kept firm hold of the boy with my left.

We were not long going down that hill, but it seemed to me an age. I could feel the perspiration breaking out all over me, and trickling down my face in big drops. At length we reached the level ground, and the instant Charley felt the weight drawing behind him, instead of pressing on his heels, he struck his trot, and in another second I pulled him in. Pouring sweat, and trembling in every limb, he stopped, not all at once, or motion-



lessly, but with an evident inclination to go on again. I was in dread lest the other wagon might come up before we were fairly disembarked, and so start him off once more. But it was far behind. I tumbled out somehow. 'Now, Jane, give me the baby. Thank God! Jump yourself! Keep well back out of the road; go to the stone wall.' A chill and faintness came over me with the revulsion of feeling. My head swam and my knees shook. With a last instinct to hold fast to the horse, I shortened the reins and took him by the head, and then went off into a fainting-fit just as I stood, half holding him, half supported by him; the last thing I heard, before losing consciousness, was Franky's exclamation: 'Oh, papa, did n't we go fast!'

A gruff voice recalled me. 'Hallo, Mister: any body hurt?' It was the b'hoy who had come up with us.

'No body; but our breeching's broke. Have you got any thing to mend it with?'

My off-handed manner just suited the b'hoy, on whom any superfluous politeness would have been thrown away. He produced a bit of cord, and helped me to splice up the harness. You may be sure I drove home pretty carefully.

Old Charley is nearly covered up. We shall soon see the last of him. That is the worst of having a pet animal; their life is so small a fraction of yours, that the separation comes just as you are fairly attached to them. I was once assured by an acquaintance of Dr. Lingard, that the historian's decease had been visibly accelerated by the death of his favorite dog. How many griefs poor Clara has had as her King Charleses, Blenheims, &c., have been carried off by the various ills to which doghood, especially *small* doghood, is heir! Baby is the wisest of us; he has set up a parroquet, which (if he does n't pull its head off meantime) will probably outlive him twice over. But Charley did n't die of old age; he was only fourteen — hardly past his prime. One summer I had to go over the water, and the gardener in whose charge he had been left, not having Tom's consideration for the equine family, allowed him to catch the heaves. Next winter we nursed him our best, and thought him fast recovering, when — this morning he died. There: they have thrown in the last shovel-ful, and smoothed the top over. He was a good friend. I feel the tears in my eyes.



'Hallo, old boy! good-morning!' I start up and see a white hat and a brown horse and a yellow gig glancing through the trees between us and the stable-yard. It is Bleecker, who has come to lunch with us and drink some of his own wine. I go to meet him, and Franky toddles after me. 'Mamma, I shall die and be buried in the orchard with old Charley, and then papa will come and cry over me.'

*Di avertile omen.*

## THE FUGITIVE SLAVE.

(1852.)

IT has become fashionable late — democratically fashionable I mean, not aristocratically — or perhaps it would be better to say *popular* — it has become popular then of late to abuse a certain very innocent class of people in our dear Gotham as *useless members of the community* — that is to say because we do not perpetually cheat one another in buying and selling lots, or deliver interminable tirades of utter bosh to crowds of admiring loafers. For my own part I have the weakness to think that dancing the polka is an occupation quite as honorable to the individual and profitable to the community as dancing attendance on office-holders; and if some of us now and then consume a little more champagne and oysters than are absolutely necessary, at any rate we foot our own bills and don't make the tax-paying public settle them for us. Surely, when our country is so well supplied with patriots that a candidate for the smallest ward office cannot be selected without wrangling infinite and an incalculable member of ballotings in caucus, is it not well that *some* part of society should be able to stand aside and look on? Yet somehow I can't help fancying that if by any popular freak, some of us were to find our way into office, we might do as well as some of the people who are there. If any of us were to be appointed to foreign *chargé-ships* for instance, we could at least talk a little French and German. I am strongly disposed to believe (having seen



both the men on the ground there — literally on the ground — several times that year) that my friend G. Boosey Esq. would have made *at least* as good an official representative of the U. S. at the court of Rauchenzubad in 1844 as did the gentleman from the South-West, the Hon. Polyphemus C. Halforse, who actually held the post. Boosey *couldn't* have got *more* drunk than Halforse did if he had tried his best, and he *could* have entered a drawing-room without making a fool of himself and talked to the people he met every day without an interpreter.

One principal reason why the class in question (of which Frank Manhattan is not ashamed to avow himself a member) has acquired a reputation for folly is that the gentlemen composing it are too much gentlemen to take advantage of other people, and too unsuspicious always to avoid being taken advantage of by other people. Consequently they usually *are* taken advantage of in their dealings with others, be it in business proper, or in politics or even in the safer walks of literature. And the *done* man is apt to be thought a fool, though perhaps in the long run the rogne who does him is the worse fool of the two; if scripture goes for anything. This reminds me how I was once practically mixed up in one of our most exciting political questions. Indeed it was no fault of mine that they didn't try me for high-treason.

Not a great many seasons ago I was bowling down from Westchester one fine Spring morning, according to a habit I had of driving in to town before breakfast and taking my matutinal meal at the club. In those days I drove a little mare that had been on the track once or twice, and was called *Lady Carpole*, after the wife of the Omnibus-proprietor of whom I bought her. She was a light little thing with some blood and not much bottom, but for a half-mile brush when she was not overweighted, it took a pacer to beat her. About that time some of us had found out that it was snobbish to be too well dressed, especially before dinner; and I used to walk and drive around in the oldest, easiest, and most dust-defying garments, grey tweed coat and trousers to match, check shirts, waiscoat *au naturel*, as we used to call it, meaning in plain English none at all, gloves ditto, checked cravat with ends flying sailor-fashion, and grey cap;



the whole attire more professional than elegant. A primitive friend of mine who belonged to the great University of Oxbridge used to walk about at all hours of the night without his academicals, 'for' said he 'the proctors will never know me for a gownsmen, I look so much like a snob.' In like manner I might have flattered myself I looked so much like a dealer or a trainer that no one would have taken me for anything else — but for the mustache.

Honest John Bull does n't understand why Young America should wear a mustache. Ask him why Colonel Dash wears a mustache and he will tell you, in a tone of compassion for your ignorance, that 'Colonel Dash is in a cavalry regiment.' Exactly — then an English gentleman's wearing a mustache shows that he is a cavalry officer. Well, my dear John, an American gentleman's wearing a mustache is equally significant, only the meaning is different. It shows (or ought to show) that he is *rentier pur*, with full power to dance the polka or drive trotters or play poker all day and all night too if he chooses. So carefully is this distinction preserved by the knowing ones that when a man of business, like our friend Ned. Bleecker for instance, goes to Paris or Baden or even Saratoga for the season, he encourages his mustache to grow, and when he returns and the winter sets in, he cuts it all off — not a very long or difficult operation by the way in Bleecker's case — and goes into Wall-Street with a clean face.

I was about half way on my road to the city jogging up a hill at an easy pace, thinking where and how far I should "brush" the mare before I got in, and whether I should encounter any one at that early hour of the day. Just as the thought suggested itself, pit-pat! came the steady step of a square trotter behind me and the next minute a magnificent horse passed my waggon at an easy gait, only a little faster than that at which we were going, an animal such as no man woman or child could have seen go by without some word look or gesture of admiration. He was a bright chesnut all over except a white star on his forehead, and his height exceeded sixteen hands by at least an inch. Save that his neck was a little too heavy (an indication of Canadian blood) the most captious observer could have found no fault in



his shape, and the beauty of his action defied criticism. His bushy tail was a good one by nature and art had played no tricks with it; it stood well out from his legs and flowed down below his hocks. I could see enough of his mouth too, as he bore slightly on the bit to be pretty sure that he was a young horse; his eyes and ears were those of a gentle one and his step very like that of a fast one. An Irishman was on his back, not riding him any too well, it seemed to me; the general absence of liveries in our country rendered it impossible to say whether he was the animal's groom or owner.

We were just at the top of the hill. 'Now for it!' said I to myself, and taking hold of the little loops attached to the reins I gave the mare a gentle pull and quickened her trot gradually. As I was ranging up alongside Pat, he began to talk to his horse and lean upon him, and away went big sorrel, faster, faster, faster down the hill, the little mare still creeping up to him with corresponding and voluntary acceleration of pace. I was rather keeping her in hand and chiefly taken up with watching the chesnut how cleanly and beautifully he stepped, till, my nag pulling harder and requiring all my attention, I suddenly found that we were going inside of a three-minute stroke, the other horse still leading a little, and his rider looking askant at me, as if to say 'where are you now?' Then I shook Lady Carpole up and lifted her and made music to her, and as I raised my voice and threw my whole weight back on the reins, she struck out with one of her dashes that she used to make whenever we wanted to get out of a tight place in the road, and carried the big horse right off his feet. Sorrel broke well for a green one and struck his trot again some three lengths behind me, but I had gained too much advantage to be easily overhauled, and the Irishman in a rash attempt to close the gap broke himself again, so that when we palled up at the bottom of the hill he was forty or fifty yards in the rear. "Whose horse is that?" I enquired as he came up on a slow trot. "Mine shure," says Pat, with a mixed expression of countenance, half pride at owning so fine an animal, half shame at being beaten.

I made up my mind to have that horse, for he was a beauty to look at, and I felt ready to bet my life be



was a good one to go. It struck me forcibly that the Irishman could n't ride him his best, which inspired the hope that he might not know enough to *sell* him his best. So I coaxed him along, sometimes on a walk, sometimes on a jog-trot till I found out where he lived. It was not more than a mile out of the way, so I accompanied him home. His home was little better than a shanty and his stable a mere shed, so small that it seemed a mystery how the big horse could get into it. All the way along I had been bringing my man gradually to the point, first ascertaining that the horse was for sale and then gradually feeling at the price; we had therefore got through our preliminaries before stopping, and soon came up to the mark pretty fairly on both sides, so that in five minutes from the time of our halt it was agreed that I should pay 400 for the chesnut, and the Irishman, (I call him *Pat* or *the Irishman* not from any disrespect to him in his national or individual capacity but simply because I do not know his real name to this day) should deliver him next morning, by which time I hoped to have the cash ready to pay for him, being about to receive a sum nearly as large on this very expedition to town. I gave Pat a stray V. which happened to be in my pocket, as earnest-money, and rattled off to the city.

After stabling my horse and calling on my debtor who paid me like a man and in bankable money too, I crowded all sail for the club, with a comfortable feeling of fulness in my pockets and a less pleasing sensation of emptiness elsewhere, for the digression after the sorrel and the dunning excursion together had considerably prolonged my morning fast. How I did astonish that beef-steak! and to see me lay fried potatoes in the shade might have made a stranger doubt my nationality and take me for an adopted rather than a native citizen. Grateful was the mild Floreza which solaced subsequent digestion while looking over the morning-papers. But soon a change came over my meditations. There had just occurred a most distressing case under the new Fugitive Slave Law. \* \* \* \* 'Altogether a most scandalous piece of business' said the *Jacobin*, and for once the *Jacobin* and I were on the same side. I worked myself up into no small rage, said many disrespectful things of their Excellencies the President and the Secretary of



state, and felt like doing something violent to vent my feelings — writing a “slasher” for instance, or picking a “muss” with the first individual I met. And when old Mr. Meriwether of Virginia, one of our non-resident members, walked through the room wishing me good-morning as he passed in his usual affable way, I returned his salutation mechanically and felt immediately after as if I had been doing something wrong, and it would have been more humane and religious to have insulted him in some way. The very locality, the walls and furniture of the room, helped to feed the fuel of my indignation, for was it not this club — *the United Fogies* — that had blackballed my friend Fielding because he was an Abolitionist? ‘The mean toadies’ thought I ‘they are like some of their wives — cotton before nature. Cotton and money and southern trade are all their principles. I would resign if I did n’t feel sure I could bother them more by staying in.’ And thus I went on fuming and fretting like a bottle of beer in the dog-days.

But, Fugitive Slave-law or no Fugitive Slave-law, I must go about my day’s work. Several little matters I had to see about, chiefly commissions for the lady part of the household, but the main business of the day was to attend a meeting at Tom Robinson’s office in Broadway. It was a committee of all the property about Devilshoof to petition the corporation; all the landholders of the neighborhood, whether resident on their properties or not, were to be represented. The corporation attorney had made a sudden move for the opening of 250th Street through all our places, just to make up a nice little bill of costs for himself and bribe a few hundred voters by giving the contractors a job. We intended to present a unanimous remonstrance of the proprietors on the line and in the vicinity of the projected improvement, and accordingly were to meet at 5 P. M. in the said office to sign the remonstrance prefaced with a few spicy resolutions.

I started on my errands, but the Fugitive question kept mixing itself up with all my thoughts and strangely confusing my transactions. I ordered a keg of pickled Carolinians at my grocer’s, and when Stewart’s clerk asked what colored gloves I wanted, replied ‘black of course.’ Having promised to take tea with the Travises who



lived a mile beyond us, I was bound to dine before the meeting and accordingly ordered my Tartaric eels and *jardinière* cutlets at Delmonico's by a quarter past three. But either from having breakfasted late or *thought too much* — a very common cause of want of appetite among our excitable people — I felt little inclination to eat and a strong tendency to take it out in drinking. So after imbibing a bottle of Mouton in addition to my usual pint of Champagne, I lit my Esculapio and strolled leisurely up Broadway. Not very far from Robinson's office my name was suddenly ejaculated in a sort of stage whisper. I turned short round and beheld Silas Benschoten.

Mr. Benschoten was a little of a lawyer and a good deal of a politician; he had also been and perhaps was still, something of a speculator. He was an out-and-out radical in politics, and professed to be something in religion; the uncharitable said it was more profession than practice. Scandal dared to hint that he would make a speech before a charitable society one night and go to a Ripton ball the next. However this might be, his outward deportment and standing were unexceptionable. He had a commanding person and persuasive manners, moved in good society and enjoyed some valuable agencies. He and I had been partially drawn together by a common Free-soil hobby, which we both rode at a pretty good pace, though my performances were usually confined to a select circle and Silas curvetted more for the public eye. But besides this he was a good judge of a live horse and a better judge of claret; a very pleasant man too at a dinner party and dinner parties always were a weakness of mine, so without being exactly confidential, we had come to be on pretty familiar terms, I should say that he was an old bachelor — for America that that is — pretty well up in the thirties, if not absolutely on the shady side of forty.

"Mr. Manhattan" said he, in a most impressive tone, "you are the very man I was looking for."

"Ah," thought I as this almost stereotyped prelude to some particularly disagreeable request struck my ear, "now he is going to ask me carry an impracticable parcel to an out-of-the way place, or to take an impertinent message to somebody, or be his friend in a duel, or most probable and worst of all, to lend him a few



hundred dollars because he has a little note to take up to-morrow."

"You are just the man," he continued "because you have nothing to do —

"I beg your pardon but I have a great deal to do. This very moment I am on my way to a meeting of great importance, and then I have another engagement out of town to-night, and to-morrow morning I must write a review of that new novel *Allham* for Hopkins, for I promised him he should have it to-morrow night and then —

He looked at me so seriously — so very Ancient-Mariner — that my catalogue of engagements was broken off before he had opened his mouth in reply. Beckoning me a few steps down a side street he went on in a low voice and with an earnest manner,

There is a young lady from the South near here — in my office in fact — at this moment, who is most desirous of getting to Canada as soon as possible. It is of the greatest importance that she should go by the five o'clock boat this afternoon. The case is so urgent that I would go myself, but you know I must be in court to-morrow for that great rail-road case, *Backus and others vs the Hardscrabble Co.*"

The whole state of the case flashed upon me in a moment. The "Young lady" was a fugitive who had been passed on from Philadelphia to Benschoten as a prominent abolitionist. The thing was common enough. Last summer I had forwarded in this way a man who came to me directed by some quaker whom I had never seen or heard of; he wore the very plantation suit in which he had escaped. I disguised him in some of my old clothes (a tall figure he cut in them) and sent my cook, a "lady of color," to see him safe on board a North River boat and pay his passage for him. But the present was a case of more interest, a woman; some beautiful quadroon perhaps, as Silas called her 'a young lady.' "Benschoten is a sharp man," thought I, "he remembers that this aiding and abetting of fugitives has been declared constructive treason. So to make all safe, I am not to know that this is a slave, nor is he supposed to know either. He puts a young lady under my charge and I take charge of her — that's all; the possible leakiness or indiscretion of either of us cannot



compromise the other." And then I spoke out and said "I'll take her."

"I thought you would" he replied. We looked very intelligently at each other and started simultaneously for his office in Nassau Street. In three minutes we were at the building in the second story of which he hung out his shingle. As we passed through the ante-chamber or front office I noticed that the clerk was absent; doubtless he had been purposely sent out of the way. Silas stopped a moment.

"Have you money enough about you for the trip. You know the bank is closed and I can't get any till to-morrow." "Yes indeed," and I slapped the 350 in my pocket. With that came across my mind the recollection of its destined purpose, making me pause a moment in my philanthropic intentions. The committee and the tea party and the article might go, but the horse could n't be lost. A thought struck me.

"Stay a bit, Mr. Benschoten. If I do this for you, you must do something for me." Succinctly yet fully I unfolded to him the history of the chestnut. He knew enough about the noble animal to understand my narrative and appreciate my feelings. He undertook to advance the money for the horse and send his clerk with it early next morning.

"And now" said he, throwing open the door of his main office, let me introduce you to Miss Amanda Middleton the young lady from the South I spoke of. Miss Amanda, this is my friend Mrs. Manhattan."

She was a brunette with somewhat irregular but not unattractive features and very respectably dressed. This was all I had time to observe, for Benschoten hurried us down stairs, remarking that we had but fifteen minutes to reach the boat.

"Miss Middleton's baggage?" I enquired! "has the hackman got it?"

"We don't take a back" said Silas with another significant look. My porter will carry the lady's trunk.

"Is that *all* the baggage?" I asked again in some amazement, as the stout Hibernian who worked for Mr. Benschoten appeared with one small trunk on his shoulder.

"All" he replied, "Miss Middleton is travelling in such haste that she had not time to put up many things."



Had I entertained any doubts as to the true character of my extempore charge, here was enough to dispel them at once. What but the imminent peril of some awful disaster, such as a return to slavery, could make a woman travel with *no* bandbox and only one small trunk?

Miss Middleton dropped her veil and clung tightly to my arm, as I set off at such a pace that the encumbered porter could hardly keep up with us. We just hit the boat; the last bell stopped ringing as we crossed the plank. I led my charge into the most retired corner of the deck cabin, if any part of a boat with five hundred people on board could be called retired, and we seated ourselves with an evident feeling of satisfaction. Listening to the rapid revolutions of the *Skimmer's* paddles, I rejoiced to think that we were safely started on the last stage but one of my companion's eventful and and perilous journey. But the inconveniences of my own position soon suggested other reflections. I was contravening the law of the land, indirectly indeed but very decidedly. There was no knowing how near the pursuers might be, or whether some accident might not throw us into their clutches, the breaking down of a train, the sticking of our boat on the "overslaugh" or the like. Nay, even at that moment, the lightning of the telegraph might be out-travelling us, and putting the hunters of men on our scent at Albany. If she were to be apprehended I should have some difficulty in clearing myself. And then my affairs at home! What will they think of me for not attending the meeting? And what will the Traveses think of me for cutting their tea-party? And what above all will my little wife think of my absence for three or four days? Even little Franky will miss his papa, and cry after him perhaps. Benschoten will not put them at rest, for he dare not tell then the whole truth. He takes too good care of himself for that.

"What are you thinking of, pray?" said the fugitive, lifting her veil and flashing an expressive look from her black eyes.

"If you wish to know very much, I was thinking of you."

"You do me too much honor" and she cast down her eyes and her veil again. It was the first time I had heard her voice. Though not harsh, there seemed a want



of refinement about it. Predisposed as I was to make her a heroine and see everything about her in the most romantic light, it did not impress me very favorably. I scrutinized her dress as well as I could without staring too much at her. It was respectable and even handsome but evidently not the work of a crack *modiste*. How should it be indeed? Again my reverie came over me and the original thread of my speculations was taken up. She is *not* a quadroon; she must be the daughter of one. Her father did his best to repair the consequences of his original fault, brought her up like a lady, probably intended to free her after his death, but his circumstances became embarrassed, or he died intestate. She was to have been sold to the spoiler and is flying from worse than death.

It must be so —

Ting ting! ting a ring ding!! ting a ting ting!!!  
ding!!!!

Confound that nigger! does he mean to deafen me for life?

"Passengers t'aven't paid 'er passage 'll please step to 'er Cap'n's officer an sett-ill!"

Now, my dear sable brother, don't make such an infernal row; we hear well enough. I had nearly forgotten that little matter of the passage money though. The lady must be left alone for a few minutes; I trust nothing will happen to her meanwhile. At any rate there is no reason for any one's suspecting her here.

There were, as has been observed, five hundred persons on board the *Skimmer* that afternoon and the Captain's office was in an awful state of siege. All the state-rooms had been engaged long ago of course, and the passengers were struggling for the few remaining berths. For myself it made very little difference; I always sit up on such occasions, but I was anxious to provide some sort of accommodation for my companion. After sustaining the usual perilous jam and providentially working through it unscathed, I found myself in front of the little window. The moment I mentioned "the lady" who accompanied me, a perceptible change manifested itself in the Captain's *very* business demeanor, and he turned his attention my way, summarily postponing the pretensions of a tall New-Englander who had



made a dead heat with me for the opening. "A lady" in America, by the way, means anything (not black) in petticoats, indeed I am not sure but since the apparition of Mrs. Bloomer the term may have taken even a wider range.

"Very sorry indeed, sir," said the gentlemanly captain — Take notice that a steamboat captain, hotel keeper, or newspaper editor is always "gentlemanly," even though he should be very much the reverse. The epithet occurs in this connexion as regularly in American penny-a-lining as the swift-footed Achilles in Homer or Merrie England in the old ballads. Is it but justice however, to him of the *Skimmer*, to say that he really deserved the stock adjective of panegyric and was a most civil and affable person.

"Very sorry indeed sir, that we can do no better for your lady, but there is not a state-room or berth in the ladies' cabin unoccupied. We will have a settee prepared for her without fail." On my reporting progress to the fair fugitive, she asked me what I intended to do, and on learning that I meant to sit up all night, "guessed" she would do so too. Natural enough that her anxiety should deprive her of any desire to sleep.

The bell rang again, this time for supper. I forced myself to eat something. Miss Middleton scarcely touched any thing. Dyspeptic and fastidious ladies are so common that the circumstance was not likely to excite attention.

Supper over, we retired to our corner in the forward part of the deck cabin. With an infinite desire to talk to my companion, I never felt more puzzled in my life how to commence a conversation. When on the Hudson one naturally talks of the Hudson and its beauties. Even in a night-boat you can expatiate on the lovely prospects that would be visible *if* it were only daylight; "now we must be passing the Tappan See; now we ought to be opposite the Kaatskills; were you ever at the Mountain House?" and so on. But to Amanda Middleton the Hudson was chiefly interesting as being her pathway to freedom and any allusion to her never having seen it before might have entailed some more compromising reminiscences. The subject I was dying to interrogate her about was the very one to which I could not allude. At last as the safest common ground I began to talk of Mr. Ben-



schoten. He was a very clever man. Yes, she said, he was, and a very smart one too. I saw we were at cross purposes, but as Benschoten was both *English* and *American clever*, I made no objection and continued that he had a great reputation for philanthropy. She assented in a tone that made it doubtful whether she quite understood what philanthropy meant. I had had the pleasure of knowing him seven years. She had not known him so long. Probably not. I wanted to ask her more, but hesitated. To be sure we were not exactly in the midst of a crowd; indeed there was not a person at that moment visible within thirty feet of us. But I knew not how many of the adjoining state-rooms might already be occupied by their tenants, and servants or passengers were continually passing. Even as I thought of this, there was a step near us; I started; it was a peddler of magazines and cheap novels. I bought one — Mrs. Trollope's last, re-christened as Mrs. Grey's, and offered it to Miss Middleton who went to work at it very quietly. Then I took a magazine for myself but could not master resolution to cut the leaves. I fidgetted and looked at my watch, thought the boat was crawling, though she was making eighteen miles an hour against the current. It came to be ten o'clock and the cabin was almost deserted. My curiosity could no longer contain itself.

"Does the story interest you, Miss Middleton?"

She said it did — no, not a great deal.

"*Your* story must be very interesting. I should *so* like to hear it. You might tell it me now without danger."

"My story?"

"Yes, the story of your life and how you came here."

"O my! Well, if I ever! Really sir this is going very far on so short an acquaintance," and she glanced round the cabin from under her veil "Some time when we are better acquainted and in some other place, I may tell you — perhaps."

It took me all aback, but she was quite right. Some one might have overheard us. Altogether she was so cool, her self-possession restored me to mine. If she was reading I might compose. Puffer Hopkins won't mind receiving his article a few days later. So I let myself slide off into a revery of composition, mentally dipping the pen of indignation into the gall of satire and elaborating



something that would give the devil — that is in this case the author of *Allham* — his due, whenever I found opportunity to throw it upon paper. By and by, becoming a little interested in my subject I took a turn up and down the now deserted cabin and then resumed my seat near Miss Middleton — only opposite instead of alongside as at first. I felt some need of an accustomed adjunct of composition, my cigar. All the waiters and stewardesses had gone to whatever served them in lieu of beds, and no passengers but ourselves were visible. "Would it annoy you if I were to smoke?" Not in the least, she said, so I lit a *Figaro* and made myself comfortable.

"Do you know!" said I after a pause, half to myself, "I pity women sometimes."

"They are to be pitied for a great many things" said Amanda.

"But this is a queer reason, you will perhaps say — because they do not smoke.

"But I do." said she naively.

I handed her my case and she chose her *Figaro* artistically and lit it scientifically.

"How awful for a woman to smoke! exclaims the genteel reader. Reader mine, I have known the most delicate and pureminded women to smoke habitually, and therefore view the matter in a different light. If a man objects to the use of tobacco altogether by either sex, that is another matter, but that your professed cigar-smoker should object to a female friend or relative participating in his pleasure, seems to me very selfish and unfair. The thing is bizarre if you like, unconventional, odd (fearful word that last to an Englishman; I don't know if we have any so dreaded in *our* language; perhaps *unpopular* would come the nearest to it,) but take my word for it, it is *not* immoral or indecent.

Perhaps one reason for my being rather gratified than otherwise at Amanda's smoking was that it obliged her to throw back her veil, which gave me full opportunity to study her features. She had a *retroussé* nose, large and lustrous though not peculiarly intelligent black eyes and a rather low forehead. Her mouth was large but symmetrical, (you could see that even with the cigar in it,) her chin full and sensuous. She looked more like



a woman who could love a man to death than one likely ever to set the Hudson on fire. I could fancy her, though not exactly my style of beauty, quite capable of inspiring *une grande passion*. My imagination conjured up the temptations, the trials, the insults she might have undergone before she was driven to seek an escape \*\*\*\*\* As regarded our mere bodily comfort, we had made a good hit in sitting up. The arm-chairs in which we reclined were not only comfortable but luxurious. How the night passed I do not clearly remember, but Miss Middleton and I smoked six cigars, (she one and I the other five) I believe I fell asleep two or three times and am certain she did once at least, for I saw her head droop forward and heard sounds (unromantic as it may seem) very like those which ordinary mortals emit when snoring.

The *Skimmer* put into dock at Albany just as the clock struck three. So anxious are our people to get *anywhere* an hour or two before any one else that they will actually destroy comfort *without* eventually gaining time for the sake of a little extra speed. What earthly use, for instance, was there in a man's being at Albany by three in the morning when he could not leave the place before seven, nor do anything — no, not even eat his breakfast before six? How much more convenient to arrive at six. Yet it was placarded as a recommendation of the *Skimmer* that she was "through in eight hours;" had she taken eleven she would have been hooted off the line.

Luckily I was known at Congress Hall and so was my friend Mr. Benschoten; we were doubly sure of meeting every attention there. My first concern was to ascertain the best means of continuing our journey, and I found that the Niagara route, though the longest and most fatiguing was decidedly the quickest. The Schenectady cars started at seven; I obtained a room for Miss Middleton and then procured of mine host some necessary articles of clothing and a small valise. To do this without exciting suspicion, I thought it necessary not only to leave a deposit but to extemporize some plausible narrative of having lost or left behind my carpet bag. Then I sat down in the bar-room, intending to watch there till six, but nature asserted her dominion,



I fell asleep in my chair and was soon lost in visions of Southerners and distressed females, bowie-knives and pistols till I woke with a start and a scream dreaming that the sheriff's hand was on my shoulder, and nearly frightened the life out of the black boots as he stumbled through the room with both hands full of slippers.

At a quarter past six Amanada appeared, much refreshed by her short nap. We were both hungry enough by this time and did justice to a very good breakfast. Once in the cars our chances of safety were much increased, as every moment carried us farther into the western part of the state where in case of our being arrested there was every chance of a rescue. Amanda looked more at ease, though she had been remarkably cool for one in her position all along, and I now began to feel more anxious for myself and my family than for her. How much had Benschoten told them?

Had he told them anything? What would they think of my absence? What excuse should I give when I came back? Then my thoughts reverted once more to Miss Middleton. There was one thing about her that puzzled me. Her accent and dialect were not in the least southern, but on the contrary exactly those of a New-England woman of the middle class — if it be not blasphemy against the sovereign people to talk of any distinction of classes in New-England. After meditating some time on this phenomenon I concluded it must be owing to her having had a New-England teacher. But a greater surprise than this was in store for me. At Utica, where we stopped to dine some of the passengers struck up the very subject of the Law. Her face evinced some disagreeable emotion. I began to tremble in spite of myself, and when one of the company suddenly appealed to her, as a woman, all my self-possession was ready to desert me. But she, with no appearance of any other feeling than vexation and disgust, replied in the sharpest tone; "I don't see why they should make such a fuss about those nasty niggers. I'm sure I never want to see one of them, and I wish they were all far enough."

I thought of Parodi's *come finge!* in Lucrezia! it was a wonderful piece of acting in real life. After that I had no further fears on her account; she might have been trusted to outface her own father, had he been the



party in pursuit. My anxieties concentrated in myself, and I had a sad fright at one stopping-place. While changing cars I observed an old gentleman closely scrutinizing me and my companion, who dropped her veil and turned her head aside. Returning his gaze I recognized old Slugden of our club; he had business in the South and travelled there often. "Ah, Mr. Manhattan," quoth he with another look at Miss Middleton, "still water runs deep they say. But I never should have expected this from you."

He knew what I was about then and whom I was escorting! "*That* Benschoten's been leading you into mischief. A married man — well it's none of my business;" and with these words he left us. I didn't think it *was* any of his business, and was glad to be rid of him. But his expressions gave me material for thought. He clearly suspected my companion's identity. She did not want to acknowledge his acquaintance. He knew that Benschoten was mixed up in the matter. Had he seen her in the South? Probably. At any rate here was the end of our secret. He would blab it all over. Well if it comes to the worst, he can't prove that *I* knew who she was.

We travelled on all that day and all night. I couldn't sleep in the cars but Amanda did, and her head reclined on my shoulder in the most sisterly manner. At length we were at Niagara. How well I remembered the crossing in former days! the little skiff, the element under us so beautifully clear, green, and still, like molten emerald, while close, to us, just over our heads as it were, thundered the terrible cataract — so like our present position, the calm of absolute safety with the consciousness that extremity of peril was close to us. But now Yankee ingenuity had already contrived a more comfortable and less romantic, though equally picturesque mode of making the transit. I thought Amanda looked pleased and tranquil, but she said nothing till we had quitted the bridge and were on English ground; then she spoke for the first time, "Now I shall be able to sleep well."

And she *did* sleep! Soon after the early dinner she retired to her room — to lie down a few moments she said — and never made her appearance till seven next morning. I thought she was going not only to make the circuit of the dial, as the French say, but to double it.



Some good part of this period I was myself making up for lost time in the sleeping line; during the rest of it, I was chiefly thinking of her. It puzzled me (then were a good many puzzles about the woman) that no one appeared to take charge of her. My link in the chain of transmission ought to be over now that she had crossed the water; some philanthropist or other should have been on hand to receive her. To whom was she ticketed? A startling suspicion crossed my mind that she might be at the end of the list; that she had no protector in Canada and was to be left to herself, unless I staid to take care of her, which I certainly could not. And in one sense she seemed able enough to take care of herself, but how was she to live without money or friends? I remembered the famous case of the runaway who after being rescued from his pursuers in Boston at the expense of a few lives, found himself considerably impeded in the enjoyment of his liberty in Canada by the fact of his being at starvation point. It would be a sad satire on philanthropy if this young woman were delivered from slavery in one country only to become a pauper, or something worse in another. Perhaps Benschoten knew this, and was too glad to get rid of the responsibility himself. She might have come to him with some such missive as this "Friend Silas, thee will receive herewith a young maiden flying from the oppressor, without friends or resources. If thee can do nothing else for her, thee will at least transmit her to the British provinces and commend her to the care of Providence. Thine, Ephraim Cutaway." Well, if Silas has passed on the joke to me in this way, I shall not feel over much obliged to him. But we shall know to-morrow.

When the morrow appeared and Miss Middleton with it, she had evidently been paying some attention to her toilette, and I could not help congratulating her on her looks. She received my sweet sayings very graciously and then, to my astonishment, informed me that she was very much obliged to me for the trouble I had taken and would have no further need of my services. She did not want to keep me from my business and friends. She expected *her* friend in the course of the day. So saying she walked into the breakfast room without waiting for me to accompany her,



signifying as it were, that my share in the business was ended.

This put the top-stone to my astonishment. The least I could have expected was that she should be very grateful to me as one of her preservers. And now she thanked me just as if I had called a carriage or carried a shawl for her. It was incomprehensible. I followed her into the breakfast room. There was no one within several chairs of us. "May I ask, Miss Middleton, *whom* you expect?" She refused to tell me. Then did she expect to meet any one *there*? If her friend was not there, he would write to her from some other part of Canada; she was much obliged to me, but she could *now* take care of herself entirely. That was all I could get out of her.

She was expecting some one then. Doubtless a fugitive like herself. Perhaps they had plighted their faith in the day of slavery, and had fled separately, not being able to fly together. It was on his account that she had acted so strangely, so rudely to me. What sort of person was he? To suppose him a black was destructive to one's romance, besides being improbable. Most likely he was one of mixed blood like herself, nearly, if not quite, white to look at. I felt curious enough to wait for his arrival, as a day more or less could make no material difference in my position.

While I was thus cogitating Miss Middleton left the table. Now that we were in Canada, I had entered both our real names for the first time in the hotel book. There was nothing surprising therefore in the barkeeper's addressing me as he did, just as I was on the point of rising myself.

"A letter, sir, for the lady who is with you." There was a letter sure enough for Miss A. Middleton and strange to say, directed in a hand-writing familiar to me, though *whose* it was I could not at the moment recollect. Miss Amanda was in the ladies' parlor, no other person occupied it. I handed her the letter, which she opened with eagerness, but at the first glance her face assumed an aspect of utter consternation, and soon she flung the epistle from her and sank into the nearest chair in an excellent imitation of hysterics. I rushed forward and attempted to soothe her but she repulsed



me with "go away! go away!" While I was standing irresolute and hopelessly mystified, my eye fell on the letter lying on the other side of the room where she had thrown it. It was not in human nature to refrain from picking up the combustible. I did and read as follows

*Dear Amanda,*

*The best of friends must part sometimes. Cannot rejoin you according to promise because must go to Europe after all. Would advise you to look out for a successor; not difficult to obtain with your attractions.*

*Ever &c. Silas B.*

'Jupiter Ammon!' quoth I. The whole field was not quite clear to me yet, but I began to have some insight into the millstone.

By this time Miss Middleton had recovered sufficiently to stand up. She saw me smiling, for after the first shock of surprise, amusement at the immense dexterity of the sell was the predominant feeling in my mind.

"Well sir, What had you to do with this?" She demanded in no very gentle accent.

"If you mean what share I have had in our friend Silas' absquatulation "I replied, hardly knowing whether to laugh or be angry" it astonishes me as much as yourself. I only know that he does n't owe me any money, which I am very glad of, and that he has sent me here on a wild-geese chase, which I am very sorry for.

"Then why did you bring me here?" She asked, in a tone that would have made her fortune or helped it at least, on the stage.

"Because" said I in the innocence of my heart "I thought you were a fugitive slave."

"You thought *I* was a slave! *Me* a slave! Do I look like a nigger? You—you—" she became momentarily speechless with rage.

"You certainly look very black." (I could not have suppressed the joke, such as it was, if it had been constructive treason under the new law.)

The fair Amanda was utterly incompetent to give vent to her emotions in words, and glanced around for some tangible means of expressing them. There was a large pewter inkstand on the mantle-piece. She made a dash at it. I made a quicker one through the door and



in three quarters of an hour was travelling homeward in the railroad, having actually forgotten to pay my (or our) bill at the Albion.

If I had made little pause going, I made less in returning, covering nearly four hundred miles without stopping half an hour till I found myself at Albany. There I rested a while and restored his properties to mine host of the Congress. While luxuriating over a leisurely meal, my eye lit on a New-York paper which had just arrived; it was the first I had seen for two days, and the first thing I saw in it was this advertisement.

"*Lost or otherwise missing*, Mr. F. Manhattan of this city. He is [here followed a tolerably accurate description of my person and a tolerably correct inventory of such garments as I had on.] Being of a very absent disposition, it is supposed he may have walked into the river by mistake. A proper reward will be paid for the body, and any information respecting him will be thankfully received by his afflicted wife or by Mr. Ashhel C. Tompkins, general agent, No. 330 Third Avenue."

Pleasant that to read of one's self! Then I turned to the Editorial department and saw;

"*Personal Items*. Mr. *Silas Benschoten*. Mysterious disappearances are becoming quite fashionable. This distinguished Abolition lawyer was yesterday found entirely *non est inventus*. Circumstances have transpired which leave no doubt that our gifted but unprincipled townsman has sailed for France in the *Humbug*, leaving several parties very much out of pocket by the journey. The De Ruyter estate is said to suffer to the tune of 25,000, and several others have been victimized in smaller amounts. We wish this were all, but worse remains to add. A certain "lady fair and free" who *ought* to be Mrs. Benschoten is missing, and as it has been conclusively ascertained that she is *not* the partner of his flight, rumor asserts that, knowing too many of his secrets, she was *disposed* of by him at the last moment with more regard to convenience than to law or morality.

P. S. Another supposed murder! An additional circumstance connects the disappearance of Mr. Manhattan, on which we commented yesterday, with the flight of his fellow abolitionist. The former was last seen in conversation with Silas Benschoten *whose office they entered*



together. It is too much to be feared that *he* as well as the young woman alluded to, have been *murdered* to ensure their silence. The police are actively occupied in searching Benschoten's lodgings in Fitz-Jones Place, but no mangled remains have as yet been discovered."

It was pretty late that afternoon when I landed from the *Sparrow* in my native city. While making my way to the Harlaem cars it struck me that there might be some one at the club going to Devilshoof that night, who could take me directly there; also that my sudden appearance might mystify the members a little and make some fun. So I struck straight out for the *United Fogies* and on arriving there pushed immediately into the dining-room. There were but six or eight men in it, among them Wm. Travis, one of the few young men besides myself who belonged to the club. As I entered unnoticed, old Slugden and Tony Jones, the two greatest gossips of our very gossippy circle, were engaged in an animated discussion about my probable fate. Jones, who being on the opposite side to Benschoten in politics, naturally inclined to the most charitable supposition concerning him, was maintaining in very positive terms that Silas had made away with me and Amanda before making away himself; that she was lying at that moment somewhere poisoned in a hole like a rat, and that I should be found some day, quartered and packed up in a pork-barrel *à la* Colt & Adams.

"Now I tell you," retorted the other, equally positive, "that I saw him and Amanda Garland with my own eyes at Rochester, going into the Buffalo cars. I spoke to them and they tried to cut me. And I'll bet you a thousand dollars that Manhattan is alive and well — that is unless Amanda —" "Go you halves Mr. Slugden!" "said I, stepping forward with a melodramatic strut, like Lusignan in *La Reine de Chypre* when he jumps out from behind the curtain and cries *moi*!

"God bless me!" ejaculated the old fellow, and starting suddenly forward, his chair slipped and he came down with a portentous squash. Tony on his part nearly turned a somerset the other way in his astonishment, and then nearly fell over Slugden in trying to pick him up. Travis caught me by both hands and the remaining members present crowded about me; in short so far as my



object had been to make a sensation it succeeded perfectly. They overwhelmed me with questions. I told my story just as it had occurred and asked Travis if he could give me a lift home that night. He could. "Well then" said I "let me share your dinner meanwhile, and tell me all that has happened here."

We called for more okra soup, more spring chickens and asparagus, and a great deal more champagne, and while I was giving an account of the provender, Travis gave me an account of Benschoten's proceedings.

Silas had become hopelessly involved, not so much from his expenditures (though these were on a sufficiently liberal scale) as from unsuccessful "operations" in Wall Street. An exposé was inevitable; he resolved to anticipate it by flight. Pocketing all his receipts at the beginning of the quarter, amounting to thirty thousand dollars or more (five sixths of which was in no respect his property but only passed through his hands as agent or receiver, to say nothing of his liabilities) he took passage for Europe under an assumed name. European rogues are invariably represented in European novels as escaping to America, and too plentiful an amount of such gentry does find its way to our shores. But it is equally true that the American rogue usually runs off to Europe. He has that and Texas to choose between. Silas' abolition — not principles exactly but professions — as well as his refined tastes made him decidedly object to the latter place. But when all his plans were arranged, he came very near bringing up in Singsing, owing to an unexpected turn in his affairs. Amanda Garland was his *chère amie*. Though this did not prevent her from having some other little flirtations on hand, and being pretty well known to a certain set, she really was much attached to Benschoten, and he loved her as much as it was in his nature to love any one but himself. Without much reputation for cleverness, it was nevertheless she and she only who discovered the secret of his desperate condition and intended departure, as women *will* find things out even when not particularly brilliant. Probably she threatened to blow up the whole project unless he would make her the companion of his journey, at any rate he actually disposed of the berth which he had engaged and promised to make Canada his refuge instead, if she would



go thither a day in advance and wait for him. After she had fallen into the snare, a mere caprice of hers was near breaking up the plan again. She would not go alone; she must have a *beau* to accompany her. With a little time Silas could easily have supplied this requisite, but time was the very thing he could not spare. His only hope was to catch some innocent travelling northward, which would have been much easier later in the season than it was at that time. All at once he stumbled upon me and his ready wit suggested the stratagem which he had so successfully put into execution. The next evening he was off in the *Humbug*.

"As for you" said Travis, "you were missed at the meeting that night and angry enough we were with you for not coming. However we signed your name to the memorial just as if you had been there, and it made no difference [not an uncommon proceeding in our free and easy country, this taking one's signature for granted]. Your family took it very coolly. Mrs. M. said you had probably gone over to Jersey to look after some horse or other. The papers haven't had much time to speculate on the mysterious disappearance, but our set said enough about it. Your old flame Mary Perkins had gone to Staten Island for some days to see her sick aunt, and Storey Hunter said she had eloped with you. You may judge what a blessing it was to her husband. I believe she felt it her duty to promenade Broadway three hours a day for three days after. And Jack Foolidge swore you were Benschoten's accomplice and twice as great a defaulter as he was. But most people thought Silas had *doctored* you to save exposure, in consequence of your having found him out."

"It's a mercy" said I "that I never was mixed up with the gentleman in any pecuniary transactions, or they might have suspected me of complicity with good reason. But have you heard anything of a certain horse that I commissioned our absent friend to buy for me?"

"That" replied Travis "I did n't mean to tell you for fear of consequences, but as you take the whole business with praise-worthy coolness perhaps you will listen to this part of it without flaring up very fearfully. The *Humbug* didn't sail till the afternoon, so that Silas had time to do one final bit of swindling just before he



started; though you would hardly have thought a man in his position competent for it. He went out to your place by day break, met the owner of the horse there, represented to him and to your groom that you were detained in town on business and had sent him to pay for the animal. So he did pay for him. Then says he 'Mr. Manhattan has promised me a drive of the horse for my trouble' and he actually borrowed your sulky and harness and drove straight off to Snaffletons.' 'Snaffleton' he says 'I have a first-rate young horse here, but he is too good for a hard-making business man like me, and besides I want some money to take up a note to-day. Just let me show you what time he can make.' So he took him round that half-mile track just below Snaffleton's and he made some very tall time for a green horse, and Snaffleton paid him seven hundred cash down. Your people could n't think what had become of him, till one of Snaffleton's boys came to Devilshoof to say that your sulky and harness were in his yard."

The surest way to disarm ridicule is to be the first to tell the story against yourself. This I did, and joined everywhere in the laugh raised at my expense. However the horse was not given up without an effect to recover him, though there was small hope of success. Benschoten had bought the chesnut with his own money — or that of his creditors — but not mine at any rate, nor had I any witnesses of the original bargain. But then again Silas had represented himself to my groom as acting for me when he bought him, and it stood to reason that I would not buy a horse to sell him again an hour after. The Irishman might have been of some assistance to me, but he had put out for parts unknown, probably Mr. Snaffleton had made it worth his while to do so, on learning the flaw in his own title. In search of Mr. Snaffleton I went. He was a dealer in and trainer of "fast crabs" about two miles below me. At first he put on a most injured innocence air as if I had come to impose upon his guileless simplicity: he had bought the horse and paid a high price for him. I offered him the price and a hundred over for his trouble. He refused, and well he might, for *he* had already been offered twelve hundred by another party, and the chesnut was believed to be worth at least sixteen. Gradually



we got into a considerable heat and made a tolerable row between us. Luckily Mr. Snaffleton was in an unusually generous mood; I suppose like Sampson Brass, he had just been cheating somebody and getting the change; and after we had interchanged much argumentative elocution he thus delivered himself of his ultimatum.

"I'll tell you what it is, Mr. Manhattan, I'm an honest man [was there ever a horse-dealer the reverse?] and I want to do what's fair, and not only fair but liberal. I bought the horse and am entitled to him but if you won't make a muss about it, I'll give you four hundred dollars."

"Cash? Snaffleton."

"Two hundred in bankable bills, there they are" spreading out four fifties of the Merchants' Bank with a magnificent air, "and my note at three months for the balance, if you'll give me a receipt in full of all claims or interest in the horse."

It was something to get 200 out of a jockey without having actually given him anything for it. I consented and wrote the discharge, and Mr. Snaffleton wrote me the note at three months in a very professional style of chirography and orthography.

"And now" said I, pocketing the four fifties, "you say you want to do what's liberal. So do I: I don't mean to be out-done by you or any other man. This note of yours being of no value whatever, I make you a present of it back again — and I hope you duly appreciate my generosity."

Three months after this there was a great match on the Centreville between two trotters, both untried but both reputed to be something very slashing. I staked a large pile on *my* horse, as we continued to call him because he ought to have been mine; and won a few hundreds, but it gave me little consolation; I was more vexed than ever to think how I had lost that chesnut, after his making such time as he then did.

I saw Amanda once again. It was the very next summer at Saratoga in the height of the season. How she got it deponent saith not, but she had plenty of money and was living on intimate terms with a very respectable Presbyterian family. She passed for a lady whose husband had been suddenly called away to the



South on business. As the Presbyterian family were not in our set, it was no business of mine to tell them who she was.

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## THE DUCHESS' POCKET-HAND-KERCHIEF.

A STORY WITH SEVERAL MORALS, AND NO PARTICULAR PLOT.

Knickerbocker, January 1855.

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MRS. ROBINSON was at a ball, sitting along-side the Duchess of Castelfondu, a real live French duchess of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Who was Mrs. Robinson? She was an American lady, and that is enough. Be assured she was no body whom you know. There is not the least possible allusion intended to the Robinsons of X — place, who are in your set, or the Robinsons of Y — street, who are not. If you *will* be very curious, her husband came originally of an English family, and was related to the Mr. Robinson who made that famous tour with Messrs. Brown and Jones, a year or two ago.

How did Mrs. Robinson come into her present position? Travelling for mere guide-book purposes is pretty plain sailing in these days of Murray and steam, when all the world speaks English, and the rest of mankind French. But travelling abroad, or living abroad, for the sake of foreign society, is another matter, and somewhat of a mystery still. Every man can go to Corinth now-a-days, but not every man or woman can see all the Corinthians. Overhaul the list of your own and your friends' experience; you will find some queer pages in it, and not a few puzzling contrasts. Mrs. M — goes abroad, dines with a prince in one country, lives at an earl's house in another, and so forth. Mrs. N — every way her equal, moving in precisely the same sphere at home, and fortified with as good antecedents and recommendations, takes very nearly the same tour without receiving the least attention worth talking of when she



gets back. She thinks it very queer. But, queerer still, Mrs. O —, who was altogether 'second set' compared with Mesdames M — and N —, takes *her* tour, and knows twice as many great people as Mrs. M — did; in fact, has scarcely any thing less than a duchess on her visiting-list. How shall we account for this? Without pretending to do so fully, we will suggest some partial explanations.

In all circles, except the strictest court and diplomatic ones, where every thing and every body go by label and ticket, change of country has a tendency to modify a man's social position, either by causing his antecedents to be ignored, or by (excuse the expression) diminishing the probability of his consequents. He has travelled partly away from the social distinctions of one country, without fully entering into those of the other. There is a stage of society in which foreigners, *as such*, are natural objects of aversion, and the same word expresses a *stranger* and an *enemy*. But this state of things is true only of a barbarous stage. Among all respectable classes of civilized society there is, on the contrary, rather a prepossession in favor of a stranger, (except, of course, where particular national enmities come into play.) We need not seek any very lofty or disinterested motive for this. All classes or sets (with the *possible* exception of purely intellectual ones) must get tired of one another; and it would hardly be going too far to say that the more eclectic, and exclusive, and fashionable a set is, the more selfwearying it becomes. All your 'punkins,' of all countries, would willingly change their circle from time to time if they could do so without permanently descending from the pedestal of their real or fancied dignity. If they could take up people of other sets *for a time only*, they would be glad to do so. Now the stranger comes in exactly to supply this want. He gives them freshness and variety of ideas for a time, and they are not troubled with him afterward. Therefore they are willing enough to receive him, if he saves their dignity by making the first advances. And if, in addition, he puts himself to what the French call the expenses of the intercourse, not metaphorically merely, but also literally, they are not only willing but delighted to associate with him. But if the stranger pretends to meet them on equal ground, and is not ready to make a gratuitous and repeated



outlay of money, or flattery, or both, then the case is altered; his claims are either critically scrutinized, or dismissed without scrutiny.

This is one reason why fashionable success abroad does not follow home rules, nay, sometimes seem to reverse them; and also why the very people whom you would suppose most qualified for living and enjoying themselves abroad frequently return in disgust after a very short trip, considerably un-Europeanized in their predilections; for these had stood too much on their dignity, supposing themselves to be somebody on the east side of the Atlantic, because they were somebody on the west, or laying too much stress on a few introductory letters, or on other claims of which we shall say more presently; in fact, considering that they had changed their country only, and not their sphere. Whereas Mr. and Mrs. Nobody, not supposing themselves in fashionable society, to begin with, make the same efforts to *get* into it that they would at home, and often with greater success.

We have incidentally alluded to letters of introduction. No part of our subject is more dubious and more difficult to reduce to rule. Perhaps one might venture to condense the result of one's experience into two general propositions: first, that such letters are much less readily and frequently given in Europe than with us; second, (what seems rather paradoxical at first,) that they are of much less value when given. But you will find much contradiction in practice, and many exceptions. One friend will tell you that he has derived the greatest benefit from his letters; another, that equally good ones have been of no appreciable service to *him*. Nay, I have known A to be better treated *solely on the strength of B's letters*, than B had ever been himself by the persons to whom he recommended A. This is a case which can hardly be accounted for on any other supposition than that of accident or caprice.

But to return: there is one cause of complaint often alleged by Americans against Europeans. You hear it most frequently from 'our best society,' and it is one of the reasons why they are so often disgusted with Europe. But it applies generally, and is only oftener heard from them because their accidental position brings foreigners in America more into contact with them. The charge is



this : that Europeans, after being treated with every possible attention in America, do not reciprocate this treatment to Americans, even their very entertainers, who visit them in Europe.

This want of reciprocity may be as disagreeable to the subjects of it as if it arose from systematic ingratitude or intentional contempt; but such is not its real origin. It is attributable to a difference in the manners and customs of the two hemispheres, want of attention to which often puts people in a false position.

The Americans are eminently a hospitable people; probably the most hospitable among civilized nations. There may be sectional shades of difference; one part of the country may be more so than another; but, on the whole, it is a hospitable country, in its internal as well as its external relations. It is a mistake to say that foreigners, *as such*, are particularly run after or made much of by our fashionable society. An English or French gentleman is treated in New-York, for instance, as a Philadelphian would be, or *vice versa*. Just refer to your own experience, reader mine. You go to Boston, or Philadelphia, or Baltimore. You know Smith of the city in question — not very intimately either. Perhaps you travelled a day with him somewhere in Europe; perhaps you drank sherry-cobblers with him one night at Newport; at any rate, you saw enough of each other to conclude mutually that you assimilated pretty well. You arrive in Smith's city; forthwith you know all his family, from his grand-mother (if you choose to take notice of her; Young America does n't generally of old people) to the little children. Smith's governor asks you to dinner, after which you are carried off to a party somewhere. You are introduced to every body in Smith's set, and they all ask you to whatever is going on in the way of festivity. In short, you are at once admitted to a whole social circle on the strength of having known one of the younger members of it. If Smith had come to your city, you and your set would have treated him in precisely the same way.

Now, on t' other side the pond the case is very different. Whatever may be the social virtues of the western Europeans, hospitality is not a prominent one. Not only so, but hospitality which has any tendency to be off-hand



or promiscuous is regarded as vulgar and contrary to good taste. One of the ridiculous traits usually attributed to the *parvenu* in a European novel is his continually asking people to dinner on short acquaintance. Nor is the etiquette of acquaintance the same. From your knowing a young man, even to a considerable degree of intimacy, it does not by any means follow that you know the older or the female members of his family. You may be on speaking acquaintance with a European for years; he may present you to his wife and sister; he may ask to be presented to yours, or he may not; and the latter is quite as likely as the former. Hence we see that a European, in treating an American just as he would have done one of his own countrymen, does not come up to the American's standard; so that our countrymen (and women) are apt to take offence where none was intended.

A practical question of some importance results. Ought we to change our manner of receiving foreign travellers, and do no more for them than they or their people would do for us? This, reader, is a question which you must answer for yourself. It has been somewhat debated of late, and there is a good deal to be said on both sides; but if you will take my opinion as worth any thing, I say No! Are our customs in this respect better than the European? *Me judice* they are, after making all allowance for extravagance and ostentation, and whatever other errors you may detect in them. *If* they are, it would be a poor and profitless sort of spite to change them for such a cause. I would not be dishonest with a rogue, or dishonest because there are rogues in the world. I would be hospitable on principle, without stipulating for re-payment in kind. Still, there is much to be said on both sides, and you must judge yourself.

There is yet another phenomenon worthy of remark in this connection — one which has surprised John Bull not a little. It is the position of sundry American residents in Paris, among the very exclusivest *coleries* of Parisian society. This is to be explained partly by the above-mentioned American proclivity to hospitality, and partly by the relation in which the 'upper ten' of France stand to the rest of their compatriots, including the powers that be.



France is probably the only country in the world — certainly the only European country — whose rulers are not 'in good society' at home; where the court is not the source and arbiter of aristocratic fashion. It was so under Louis Philippe; it is so under Louis Napoleon, though political quidnuncs prophecy a change, and predict that all the Faubourg St. Germain will go over one by one to the imperial colors. But as yet no lady of the old aristocracy will show herself at the Tuileries; nay, no man, unless he be an officer in the army, and therefore obliged to present himself there as a part of his professional etiquette. If the Faubourg St. Germain disowned the court, much more must it the finance, which is only a lower stage of the court set, hanging on to whatever is the court for the time being — Orleans or Bonaparte.

Thus the Faubourg was thrown on its own resources for self-entertainment.

Now, the Faubourg St. Germain in itself was a small set — very well bred and well educated, no doubt — but somewhat dull withal, and inclined to be wearied of itself, and want an little variety — as indeed we have remarked that all small and highly exclusive sets must be. But why should it not give balls to itself? Are not a hundred people enough to keep up a dance together all the year round, if the accessories hold out?

Ah! reader, in that last *if* lies the secret. The Faubourg was comparatively well off — far enough removed from the poverty of the Spanish Hidalgo — but yet by no means so rich as some other Faubourgs of its own city, not to mention the fashionable aristocracy of some other countries. And loving external show — as what Frenchman does not? — having also caught a sort of Anglo mania in things equine, and essaying to improve on its English models — the Faubourg must turn out the neatest and best-appointed equipages in the Bois de Boulogne. Loving the stage — as what Frenchman does not? — the Faubourg must have its opera-boxes; and in consequence of these out-door expenditures, the Faubourg had little left to give itself balls at home. But the Faubourg must have balls to go to; most idle people like balls, most fashionable people require balls, most



Frenchmen cannot exist without balls; and the Faubourg was very idle, very fashionable, and very French.

At this crisis appeared, like gods out of the machine, various rich Americans, who from time to time (*uno avulso non deficit alter aureus*) settled in Paris, because Paris was a very nice place to spend money in. These began to entertain, with characteristic hospitality, hanging out to the natives, just as they used to do to their countrymen at home; and the native aristocracy were very glad to come, since not only they were fed and danced for nothing, (that is to say, for the honor of their company,) but they had a common ground whereon to meet, without lowering their dignity, other sets of their own townsmen. And thus it happens that almost the only place where you are sure to meet representatives of *all* classes of French society — Legimist, Orleanist, Court, Finance — is the ball-room of some rich American. There is an English proverb about a certain class of persons who make feasts, and a certain other class who eat them; I do n't know if the French have a corresponding proverb in their language, but they understand the practical illustration of it to perfection.

Bless me! says the reader, have you taken all this round-about to tell us that Mrs. Robinson gave a ball, and the Duchess came to it? Do n't be in a hurry, friend reader, Mrs. Robinson did n't give a ball — at least not on this occasion. She was not only alongside a real French duchess, but at a real French ball, given by a real countess of the Faubourg St. Germain, the Countess Bazalion; which involves another digression.

Mrs. Robinson had in her party a very nice girl, Miss Robinson; not her daughter. Mrs. R — was not old enough to have a daughter 'out;' she was niece, or cousin, or something to Robinson — at any rate his ward. Now, the Robinsons were at the *Italiens* one night, and in a box nearly opposite them were their friends, the Smiths, (when I say their friends, I mean that the Ss and Rs belonged to the same set at home, and went to each others' balls and so forth.) These meetings are frequent enough now, when our countrymen who winter in Paris may be counted by thousands; sometimes you will see so many of them at the *Italiens* that you might almost fancy yourself in Astor-Place again. Well, with the



Smiths was the young Count Chateaudore. He often came into Smith's box, for he liked to be seen with a pretty woman and a stranger; it gave him a chance to show off — *poser*, as he would have called it — and made his friends ask questions. And the Count, having observed sundry telegraphs of recognition between the Smiths and the Robinsons, inquired of Mrs. S. who her friends were, and was informed accordingly. He took a casual glance at Miss Robinson through his glass, and observed that she was nothing extraordinary, or words to that effect.

'But she's a great heiress,' quoth Mrs. Smith, 'four millions at least.'

Eight hundred thousand dollars is a good round sum enough when enunciated in American coin; but put it into French, and it becomes quite stunning. The Count took a rapid rub at the glasses of his lorgnette, and an energetic survey of Miss Robinson. It was astonishing how the young lady improved on second sight. He pronounced, in a more positive tone than before, that she was 'not so bad.'

The Count was related to the Countess Bazalion. How it happened exactly, I don't know, but soon after, Mrs. Robinson was presented to the Countess at some ambassador's ball, and before long the Countess actually gave a ball herself, and asked all the Robinsons to it.

So now we have got fairly back to Mrs. Robinson. Perhaps it was as well to give her time to collect herself, for she did not feel entirely at her ease. She could talk French fast enough and correctly enough too — not like poor R—, who used to confuse words now and then — interchange *menage* and *manege*, for instance. Neither her maid, her milliner, nor her mantua-maker — those three Ms that are such capital letters in the alphabet of a lady's life — ever could excuse herself for non-execution or mal-execution of orders, on the ground that she had not understood Madame. But when it came to good society, she was always afraid her foreign accent might expose her to ridicule. This was one of her most sensitive points. She wanted to talk exactly like a French lady, more than half-suspected she did n't, and was therefore continually nervous lest Frenchmen or French-women should laugh at her.

O my dear Mrs. R—, when will you exert a little



of that good sense and reason which Providence and your Anglo-Saxon instructors gave you, and see that being ridiculed and being ridiculous are two very different things — that in estimating the damaging power of ridicule, the agent is to be taken into consideration, and not the object only? How the finished rogue laughs at the honest, quiet citizen! How the man-about-town derides the scholar! How the grasshopper in the fable overwhelmed the poor ant with her ridicule! O Mrs. R—, there are other things which you have not unlearned, and which you would be sorry to unlearn, and which all your home-friends will be still more sorry if you ever do unlearn, but which make you quite as ridiculous in the eyes of these elegant Parisians as your foreign accent. It is ridiculous in you to go to church so often. It is ridiculous in you not to know all about the intrigue of the Marquis de Machin and the Russian Princess Choseoffski, and not to take any interest in it after it has been explained to you. It is ridiculous in you to have your children tagging at your heels half the time. It is ridiculous in you to think so much of your husband, and so little of other men. It was very ridiculous in you to snub the Baron de Boisbrulé so when he made love to you (on the second day of your acquaintance) and to have been so distant to him ever since. The Baron thinks you quite a savage.

But though Mrs. R— did not talk much to the Duchess, for fear of exposing her accent, she took a pretty comprehensive survey of the great lady, and came to the conclusion that she herself, simple Mrs. R—, was considerably younger than the Duchess, at least as good-looking, and quite as well dressed. And as she arrived at this satisfactory result, she began playing with her embroidered handkerchief, when suddenly she started, with so much surprise in her countenance that the Duchess could not help looking at the cause of her surprise — that is to say, in the direction of Mrs. R—'s hands — and immediately her countenance also betrayed indubitable marks of astonishment, though of course she was too well-bred to blush. Well *might* she be astonished for on the corner of the handkerchief was conspicuous an embroidered coronet, and under the coronet were the Duchess's own initials!

The awkward pause that ensued was broken by the



French lady. 'I believe, Madam,' said she, 'we have made a mistake, and exchanged handkerchiefs;' so saying she possessed herself of the coroneted one, and handed over her own to Mrs. Robinson, who, though utterly unable to conceive *how* the exchange could have been effected in the first instance, was rapturously glad to have it rectified, and at once set about inspecting the recovered article, to make sure that it was all right this time. But soon she looked more perturbed than ever, for there in the corner were the same coronet and initials! The ladies compared the handkerchiefs; they were precisely alike, stitch for stitch, only one was a thought more perfumed than the other. What had been done, and what was to be done? The Duchess had not brought two handkerchiefs, and Mrs. R— come without any; that seemed sufficiently obvious. Yet both of them were the Duchess's, as far as marks could make them. Mrs. R— was on the point of saying that it probably arose from a washer-woman's mistake; but then she doubted if a duchess could reasonably be supposed to have any direct knowledge of such people as washer-women. Both parties were in a great state of marvel, which might have continued indefinitely, for any thing either of them could do to throw any light on it, when suddenly a young man — not the Duke of Castelfondu, who *was n't* a young man by any means — invited the Duchess to the supper-room, and the Duchess was so delighted with the attentions of this young beau of the 'Baby Club' — a flourishing infant of thirty-eight, or thereabout — that she quite forgot the cambric mystery, and walked off, leaving the original cause of surprise in Mrs. R—'s hands.

That lady did n't care about supper. She was anxious to go home. Robinson was not in the least unwilling to gratify her. He thought a French supper not worth staying for; a very contemptible affair, where there was little wine and no punch.

His wife could hardly sleep that night for continuing to wonder about the handkerchief, and the first thing next morning she overhauled her washer-woman;

'That is to say, she would have done, but that she was prevented,'  
like Guy Fawkes in the song; for the washer-woman lived in the country, as most French ones do, it not



being the Parisian custom to have a laundry at home; and as the wash only came on Saturday, and it was now Tuesday, she must wait nearly a week for any information from that source. So meanwhile she unbosomed herself to her maid. Mlle. Marie, after the usual profusion of shrugs and exclamations, set her wits to work to account for the phenomenon, and soon recollected that, having to get Madame a pocket-handkerchief at the last moment on the previous evening, she had taken one from Monsieur's room, which was nearer the parlor than Madame's, knowing that Monsieur had very handsome handkerchiefs, fine enough even for Madame to carry.

Here was a chance for a family scene. Luckily Mrs. Robinson was too sensible a woman to be jealous, and Robinson too proper a man to give her just cause. But she could not resist the opportunity for bantering her husband, (few women can,) and poor Robinson, who had never spoken to Madame de Castelfondu in his life, and hardly knew her by sight, found himself 'run' in a way that mystified him exceedingly. When at length his better-half condescended to make a serious explanation, his perplexity was by no means dispelled, nor did a sight of the object afford any assistance to his memory.

No very long period elapsed before Robinson might have been seen, if any one had been in his room to see him, making a deliberate investigation of his whole wardrobe, and that without calling in the assistance of his valet. It was no brief task; for Robinson, like many of his countrymen, who have (or indeed who have not) lived abroad, rejoiced in a pretty extensive stock of foppery. Without going into other particulars, it may be sufficient to observe that his especial weakness was for lace and cambric, about which he knew as much as any woman. His dress shirts were something super-exquisite, his white cravats had lace points, and some of his handkerchiefs were, as Marie had said, fine enough for any lady to carry. As often happens in such cases, he was not completely informed as to the extent and limits of his wardrobe. He was tolerably conscious himself that his servant might appropriate a few stray articles without his being likely to miss them. But that that worthy should have *added* any thing to the stock was not overlikely; beside, though Monsieur Joseph, being a



Frenchman, had, of course, his 'successes,' he did not quite aspire to rank duchesses among them. However, as Robinson proceeded with his investigation, he discovered that *somebody* had put some things there which were not his. First he fished up a false collar — Robinson never wore false collars; he would have repelled the insinuation of such a possibility with indignation: then came to light a check shirt, of a pattern which he did not affect. How the dickens did these things come there? He, like his wife, began to suspect the washer-woman of gross carelessness. There were no more strange pocket-handkerchiefs, however. Stay, though! — from the bottom of a heap appeared one, though very unlike the original cause of doubt. It was of coarser texture than any of those near it, and marked with — not a coronet or a duchess' initials, but a big T, in indelible ink.

A light flashed on the mind of the puzzled man. Not many months before, young Thompson, fresh from his trans-atlantic home, had occupied that very room. The Robinsons were just going off to Switzerland when Thompson, the son of an old friend, made his appearance in the metropolis of pleasure. Robinson, unable to do any thing else for his visitor, had left the apartment at his disposal during their absence. One day Thompson left the premises in haste, possibly not quite sober; probably he carried away some of Robinson's linen, at any rate he left some of his own behind. Monsieur Joseph had made an observation thereanent at the time.

Thompson, therefore, must have introduced the coroneted handkerchief into that wardrobe. But where did *he* get it from? Leaving all other considerations out of the question, his Parisian residence had not been exactly coincident with the fashionable season. Robinson would write to Thompson and ask him. Alas! Thompson had started, as Americans will, to 'do' all Europe and part of Asia and Africa in six months. It was hard saying in what part of the globe he might be at that moment. So, for the present at least, nothing was left for Robinson but to wonder away. The washer-woman, when her day came round, could throw no light on the matter.

But it so happened that the very next week Robinson received at letter from Jones, then sojourning in Rome, which, among other gossip, enumerated sundry



of their compatriots then to be found in the Eternal City, and mentioning Thompson among them, with the farther information that he (Thompson) was to stay there a whole fortnight, 'to see every thing that could be seen.' Thereupon Robinson, without taking into account the nice little piece of work that his former guest had undertaken — enough to keep him busy twenty hours out of the twenty-four, if he went through it conscientiously — wrote off to beg an elucidation of the handkerchief, always provided there was no secret attached to it which involved any one's honor.

The answer arrived in due time, somewhat illegible, and bearing marks of haste and fatigue generally, inasmuch as the writer had been to nineteen *palazzi* that morning. Thompson could not precisely say how the bit of cambric had come into his custody, indeed, did not know that he had ever had any thing of the sort; but he remembered being out of handkerchiefs on one occasion, and borrowing some of Mrs. Thompson.

Now Thompson was not married in the least. Nevertheless, Robinson understood perfectly who was meant by Mrs. Thompson.

The modern Parisians are not on the whole very similar to the ancient Athenians, but they have some points of resemblance to them. Among others, they have elevated their *hetereæ* into a not merely recognized, but actually conspicuous and celebrated class of society. Only, while the Aspasia of Greece were renowned for their mental accomplishments and intellectual brilliancy, their representatives in the French capital are, if you will believe the satirists and *quasi*-moralists of the day, densely ignorant and astoundingly stupid. But in this judgment, involving as it does a high compliment to the fashionable society of both sexes, to the taste of its male and the attractions of its female members, the satirists in question are but half right. They ear from judging cleverness and stupidity solely, or almost solely, by a literary standard. Ignorant and uneducated these women doubtless are, so far as concerns orthography and grammar; but profound students of human nature, great readers of men, if not of books. It is said that there are self-established grades among them, and that such as are actresses profess to look down upon those who only practice the other branch.



of the profession, but in truth they are all actresses, and can play any part which their immediate interest suggests. They can be gay or pensive, savagely jealous or blindly indifferent, according to the tastes of their temporary friends; they know how to disarm suspicion, or to excite jealousy, according as either course is the more expedient. In short, they lead a man whither they will, by successful appeals to his vanity. And therefore, in a great measure, it is that they have attained their position in France, elsewhere unattainable; for your Frenchman is the vainest of men; and though sharp enough to cheat others, may be cheated himself with equal ease, when you have once found the *corde sensible* whereby to play on his vanity. This explains, too, why Young America is victimized by the same class to such an extent; for the American, though less afflicted with vanity than the Frenchman, has a good deal in comparison with some other nations.

Thompson's stay in Paris, though short, had been long enough to entangle him. The original name of the lady above referred to as 'Mrs. Thompson,' was probably lost in obscurity; but she was known to the gay world as Mademoiselle Amanda.

No doubt, reader, however philosophic you may be, it has happened to you once in your life to fidget about some essentially unimportant matter, until, by mere dint of fidget, it became of the greatest importance to you. So it was now with Robinson. He could not rest till he had 'spotted' the handkerchief. Up to a certain point he had traced it, and Mlle. Amanda might have appropriated a coronet just for fun, as ladies of her class sometimes do; but the initials were as far as ever from being accounted for. Perhaps he would have ended by absolutely calling on her to ask for an explanation, though quite conscious that such a step would be possibly compromising and probably ridiculous, when another lucky accident suggested to him another way. He received an invitation from Wilkinson to attend his housewarming.

Wilkinson was a gay young bachelor, who had just left that rendez-vous of gay young bachelors, the Hotel des Princes, for furnished apartments. Oh! if his Presbyterian father and his Congregational aunt



could have seen the kind of house-warming he was going to give, and the sort of celebrities who were to 'assist' at it!

Nevertheless, you may accompany us thither for a short time without fear of being shocked; for there will be some green Americans present, and to make a proper impression on them, appearances will be preserved, at least, till after supper. It looks pretty much like any small ball, where there is a good deal of energetic dancing, considerably more polka than quadrille.

It has sometimes occurred to me that if the ladies — the *real* ladies — who cultivate so assiduously the worship of Terpsichore, as developed in the modern rites of waltz, polka, schottisch, &c., could know, even approximately, the stamp of dissipation which these amusements bear in their origin and associations; what a place they occupy in the fast life of Paris, how far excellence in them goes to give reputation and success in what the French call *thirteenth-ward society*, (farther, probably, than any thing except the *musique à la Marco*, the jingle of the almighty coin,) how generally the young man's initiation into the mysteries of the light fantastic at Cellarius' or Laborde's goes hand in hand with his initiation into vice and profligacy — if they knew these things, *perhaps* they would not be so rapturously fond of or so exclusively devoted to this particular sort of relaxation. But of course our ladies do n't know these things. How should they? Perhaps it is very shocking in me even to hint at them.

The male portion of the company is not wholly made up of Americans. By no means. Beside some other foreigners, Spaniards or Italians, there are numerous natives. Most of these wear orders. You must not suppose they have not a perfect right to do so. Decorations are cheap in these parts. It is not necessary to do any thing very great, or even any thing very bad, to get one. The Legion of Honor is a pretty good-sized army in itself, say fifty thousand. You shall see a man with some thirty-six stars and ribbons. He keeps a box full of them, about as big as a good-sized trunk, and delights to pull them out and show them to his acquaintance on small provocation, like a child exhibiting his toys. Yet this man positively never did any one remarkable



thing in his life. He did n't even shoot any of the town-snobs (*bourgeois*) in that little affair of December 1851. But once he was sent to a duke's wedding, and another time to a king's funeral, and another time he travelled with a prince's mistress, and on each of these occasions some body sent him a decoration.

Robinson, however, was not looking for any one of these decorated gentlemen, nor for any of the otherwise decorated ladies. He was seeking a compatriot, one Johnson, a middle-aged bachelor, who had been much behind the scenes, literally as well as metaphorically. Johnson was perfectly posted up in all the chronicles of scandal and gallantry for the last fifteen years; could tell you how many men *La Belle Henriette* had ruined, and what hospital she died in, and whom Prince Rubleskoi had patronized after he quarrelled with Mlle. Sauterelle of the Grand Opera. There are people who call this sort of statistics *knowledge of the world*, and regard those who are ignorant of them as uneducated simpletons.

'Good-evening!' says Robinson, 'I heard from our young friend Thompson the other day. He has n't forgotten the fair Amanda yet.' ('Should n't think he would!' parenthesized Johnson.) I was to present his remembrances to her, but she does n't seem to be here to-night.'

'No; the Duke has as little private spree of his own going on to-night somewhere.'

'The Duke?'

'Yes; the serious man, since Thompson left.'

What had serious men to do with Miss Amanda? Reader, *l'homme serieux* is the one who pays the expenses, and a very serious thing it is, as may you never learn by experience.

'But *what* Duke?' persisted Robinson.

'Why, the man with the very black whiskers — Castelfondu.'

Robinson fairly clapped his hands for joy. He had accounted for the milk in the cocoa-nut this time. Evidently the Duke had given some of the Duchess' handkerchiefs to Amanda. Delighted at having attained this satisfactory conclusion, he ran off home immediately, yet not time enough to escape the notice of the *Sewer* reporter,



who was present, disguised as a French waiter, and who gave him a prominent place in his next letter.

Whether Mrs. Robinson ever explained the matter to the Duchess, or whether she even sent her back her handkerchief, I really do not know. Like Robinson after he made the discovery, and story-tellers generally 'I came away then.'

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## THE GREEN MONSTER. — A TEMPERANCE TALE.

Translated for the *Literary World*, from the French of *Gérard de Nerval*, and respectfully dedicated to the T-totallers of Armerica.

April 1858.

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### I. THE DEVIL'S CASTLE.

DIFFERENT evil spirits are known to have different localities.

The devil *Vauvert* is essentially an inhabitant of Paris; he has resided there for several centuries, if the historians are to be believed. Sauval, Felibien, Sainte-Foix and Delacroix have told us of his pranks at length.

He appears at first to have inhabited *Castle Vauvert*, which was situated on the very spot now occupied by the merry Chartreuse ball; that is to say, at the end of the Luxembourg, and opposite the alleys of the Observatory.

This castle, of sad reputation, was partly demolished, and its ruins became out-houses and offices to the convent of Chartreux, in which convent *Jean de la Lune*, nephew of the anti-pope Benedict XIII., died in 1414. *Jean de la Lune* was suspected of holding intercourse with a certain devil, *probably* the familiar spirit of the old Castle Vauvert, for each of these feudal edifices *had* its familiar spirit, as is well known. History, however, has left us no positive information on this interesting point.

But the devil Vauvert made himself talked about again in the time of Louis XII.



For a long time there was heard every night a great noise in a house constructed of the ruins of the old convent, and deserted by its owners several years previous.

The neighbors, in a great fright, applied to the lieutenant of police, who sent some archers. What was the astonishment of these soldiers, on their arrival, to hear the clinking of glasses, mingled with boisterous laughter!

The first supposition naturally was, that some robbers or coiners were holding an orgie, and, judging of their number from the noise they made, it was deemed prudent to send for a reinforcement. But the noise seemed to increase with the arrival of the new squadron; and the sergeants were in no hurry to lead their troops into this den, where they heard disturbance enough to have been the work of a whole army.

At last, about morning, a sufficient body of troops arrived. They entered the house just as its obscurest corners were lighted up by the rays of the rising sun. Nothing was to be seen, and all was silent!

The examination lasted all day. When every part of the premises above ground had been ransacked, some one suggested that the noise might have come from the cellar. The catacombs were in this quarter, and there might very possibly be a communication.

But while the police were preparing to act upon the hint, night set in again, and the noise recommenced louder than ever.

Some of the soldiers, however, had previously looked into the cellar and discovered nothing there but bottles. "It must be the devil that has set them a dancing," said they; and no one dared to descend and disturb his Satanic Majesty's amusement.

The authorities contented themselves with occupying the approaches to the street and asking the prayers of the clergy.

The clergy prayed to any extent, and even squirted a large amount of holy water into the cellar through the trap-door.

The noise went on all the same.

## II. THE SERGEANT.

During a whole week the neighborhood was blocked up by a crowd of citizens, half frightened and half curious.



At length, a provost-sergeant, bolder than the rest, offered to descend into the accursed cellar, in consideration of a pension, to revert, in case he perished in the attempt, to a dress-maker named Peggy.

He was a brave man, this sergeant, very little superstitious, and very much in love. He adored the dress-maker, who was a very neat and very frugal person — indeed, one might almost call her miserly.

She would not marry a simple sergeant with no income. But on gaining a pension, the sergeant would seem quite another man in her eyes.

Encouraged by this prospect, he exclaimed that he believed in neither God nor the devil, and that he would find out what this noise was.

"What *do* you believe in, then?" asked one of his comrades.

"I believe," he replied, "in the Lieutenant of Police and the Provost of Paris."

Having enunciated this laconic and pregnant creed, he took his sabre between his teeth, a pistol in each hand, and ventured boldly down the steps.

A most extraordinary spectacle awaited him on reaching the floor of the cellar.

All the bottles were rolling in a voluptuous dance and forming most exquisite figures. The green-seals represented the men, and the red-seals the ladies.

There was nothing wanting, not even the orchestra, which was posted on the shelves. The empty bottles sounded like wind instruments; the broken bottles like cymbals and triangles; the cracked bottles emitted a piercing harmony like that of violins.

The sergeant, who had imbibed a few horns before undertaking his expedition, seeing only bottles there, felt greatly reassured, and began to dance himself in imitation of them.

By-and-by, encouraged by the charming gayety of the spectacle, he caught up a nice, long-necked bottle, carefully sealed with red, and apparently containing white claret, and pressed it lovingly to his heart.

Mad laughter resounded on every side! The startled sergeant let fall the bottle — it broke into a thousand pieces!

The dance stopped; cries of terror were heard in



every corner of the cellar, and the sergeant felt his hair stand on end as he beheld the spilt wine forming a pool of blood. The corpse of a naked female, whose fair hair swept the ground and dabbled in the red moisture, was stretched at his feet!

The sergeant would not have been afraid of the devil in person, but this sight filled him with terror; however, remembering that he must give some account of his adventures, he suddenly seized a green-seal that was grinning in his face, and cried "I'll have *one* at any rate!"

A thundering peal of fiendish laughter replied, but the sergeant was already half way up the steps. In another instant he stood among his comrades and showing them the bottle, exclaimed, "Here's a goblin for you! A pretty set of soldiers you are to be afraid of going into a wine-cellar!"

The piqued archers rushed down the steps pell-mell, and sure enough, they found only a broken bottle of claret in the middle of the floor, and a quantity of whole ones in their places.

The archers lamented the fate of the broken bottle, but, brave enough now, thought it their duty to remount each with a bottle in his hand.

They had fairly earned them and were allowed to drink them.

The sergeant said "As for me, I will keep mine for my wedding."

There was no reason for refusing him the promised pension, so he married the dress-maker, and —

You were going to say they had plenty of children. On the contrary — they had only one.

### III. WHAT FOLLOWED.

At the sergeant's wedding supper he put the famous green-seal bottle between himself and his bride, and the two had it all to themselves.

The bottle was green as grass; the wine red as blood.

Nine months after the dress-maker was delivered of a little monster entirely green, except two red horns on his forehead.

Now, after that, young girls, go and dance at the Chartreuse, on the site of Castle Vauvert — if you can!



The child grew — in size if not in virtue. Two circumstances annoyed his parents, his green color and a caudal appendage, which at first seemed only a prolongation of the *coccyx*, but gradually assumed the character of a genuine tail!

The surgeons and learned men of Paris were consulted. They declared it impossible to extirpate the tail without endangering the infant's life. They added that it was a case exceedingly rare, but of which examples were cited in Herodotus and Pliny the Younger. (*Fourier's* system had not been then invented, nor Lord Monboddo's.)

As to the color, they attributed it to a predominance of the bilious system. Nevertheless they essayed several caustic applications in the hope of modifying the too decided tint of the epidermis. After a number of washes and frictions they succeeded in changing the original grass-green first to a bottle-green, then to a sea-green, and finally to an apple-green. Once the skin appeared quite white, but in the evening it re-assumed its verdant hue.

The sergeant and the dress-maker could find no consolation for the annoyance caused them by this little monster; for his moral qualities is no way compensated for his physical disadvantages; he grew more obstinate, ill-tempered, and malicious every day.

The melancholy which they experienced led them into a vice too common among people of their class. They gave themselves up to drink.

But the sergeant would only drink wine sealed with red, and his wife would only drink wine sealed with green.

Every time the sergeant was dead-drunk he saw in his sleep the bleeding woman whose apparition had so terrified him when he broke the bottle in the cellar. The phantom would say to him, "Why didst thou press me to thy heart and afterwards slay me? — me, who loved thee so well!"

Every time the sergeant's wife had been too attentive to the green-seal, she saw in her sleep the apparition of a huge and hideous green devil, who said to her, "Why art thou astonished to see me? Didst thou not drink of the bottle? Am not I the father of thy child?"

When the child was thirteen years old he disappeared one day, and no one ever knew what became of him.



His inconsolable parents continued to drink; but they never saw again the terrible phantoms which had tormented their sleep.

#### IV. MORAL.

Thus the sergeant was punished for his impiety and the dress-maker for her avarice, and both for their intemperance.

## A COMMISSION OF LUNACY.

Literary World, February 1851.

"WHAT security have we," asked Bishop Berkeley, "that nations as well as individuals may not suddenly go mad?" What security have we, ask we, that a periodical with all its contributors may not go crazy *en masse* — clean daft on some hobby or other — and remain so for a tedious length of time? This query has been forced on our consideration by the extraordinary conduct of our whilom respected contemporary, the *American Whig Review*. For the last we don't know how many months it has been unable to talk (or rather rave) on any subject but two — *England* and *Free Trade*, two monstrous nightmares which haunt all its dreams. The aggressions of England and the dangers of free trade — these alternately are the staples of every one of its articles, no matter what the heading be. Thus, in the current number there is something professing to be a story of fashionable life in New-York (it might as well be in Nova-Zembla or New-South-Wales, for any resemblance it has to the reality); but before many pages it slides off into an exposition of the peculiar (political shall we call them?) views which characterize all the other papers of the Review. Every person, every occurrence of note has, in the excited imagination of our contemporary, some connexion with the gigantic conspiracy which England (aided, alas! by traitors among ourselves) is getting up against American industry and the liberties of the



whole world. At the head of this conspiracy stands H. R. H. Prince Albert, &c., who, tired of his amateur-tailoring pursuits, has left off inventing fantastic regimentals and ventilating hats to get up the Exhibition of Industry — a great scheme of universal delusion, whereby the senses and substance of all nations are to be taken prisoner and shut up in a big glass case — a sorcerer's palace, in which the eyes and ears of all the world and his wife are to be drugged and fascinated. His prime coadjutor on this side the water is — of all men on earth to favor free-traders and monarchists — the editor of the Tribune. Deeply implicated with and forming a sort of link between these, is Mr. James, the novelist, whose advent to these shores, it seems, had a hidden political purpose now first discovered, and whose immortal "two horsemen" are by our contemporary's heated vision metamorphosed into two fiery griffins ready to swallow up all our mills and factories after the precedent of the renowned Dragon of Wantley. Is n't it awful to contemplate? Will no protecting power interfere in time to save our beloved republic from the unhallowed designs of this nefarious triumvirate, Prince Albert, Horace Greeley, and G. P. R. James, who are coming to take away Nicaragua, and all our other liberties?

It is much to be deplored that several unfortunate facts of recent occurrence, attested by the word of dozens of newspaper writers, afford some foundation for the hallucination of our esteemed contemporary. Thus it is notorious that George Thompson, M. P., and so forth, was sent out here express by the British government to effect a dissolution of the Union, for which purpose a large amount was subscribed, Lord Stanley, Baron Rothschild, Mr. Cobden, Professor Punch, and other well known personages, having put down their names for sums varying from L. 5000 to L. 10,000 each — the surplus to be devoted to the buying up of John Jay, Esq., and other gentlemen of the Abolition persuasion. It has also been long known to all readers of the *Sun*, that our Minister in England has sold the whole country, East, West, North, and South, to the Court of St. James, receiving as the price of his iniquity the promise of the Dukedom of Massachusetts. To these familiar instances we can add some that have recently come under our own



observation. Thackeray, in his last work, has a whole page in praise of the New-York exquisites, whom he celebrates as having the finest beards, smallest feet, and largest cigars in the world. It is clear he would not say anything so flattering of the country without some ulterior object; which object, we learn from independent sources, to be that of visiting us; and this visit is clearly for the purpose of concocting with G. P. R. James (the Orestes and Pylades friendship of the two writers is well known) some atrocious plot against our liberties. But more. The approaching arrival of *Martin F. Tupper* is publicly announced, and a Washington correspondent of the *New-York Herald* has it on the best authority that President Fillmore has received intelligence from a source worthy of credit that the said Tupper is making arrangements with his friend Robert Dodge, Esq. (some mention the Editor of the *Knickerbocker* as an accomplice in the business, but this part of the report wants confirmation), to blow up the North River, and destroy the navigation of the Erie Canal.

Seriously speaking, is it not rather absurd that this "Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations," *which is an un-English idea from beginning to end*, should be represented as a great conspiracy of England against the interests of the world? This notion was altogether too cosmopolite and social for an English ministry or an English public to originate; the merit of it belongs entirely to the Queen's husband. The English, who endured the German Prince well enough so long as he only made hats and shot pheasants and gave them something to laugh at, began to abuse him as soon as he got hold of an original and successful idea. They swore at the expense of the preparations, forgetting the enormous sums that foreign visitors would bring into their island; they were in agonies lest *Rotten Row* should be destroyed, though none of the plans contemplated interfering with that particularly stupid equestrian promenade. The feeling was so strong that it actually made Brougham and Campbell, for the first time since they had been peers together, take the same side. The Prince's position and the Court influence just managed to carry the project through; but to this day the great organs of public opinion in England have not ceased to rail and sneer at it.



And now some of our wiseacres discover that the whole is a device of Russell, Palmerston, and Cobden, to bamboozle Brother Jonathan, and destroy American manufactures.

While we are thus writing, a friend who is deeply skilled in antiquarian lore, and has been diving into the newspapers of the last three weeks, looks over our shoulder, and informs us that the real detector of the awful moral torpedo concealed in this great glass house is not our friend the *American*, but one of our City Fathers. Alderman Shaw (may his intelligence never be less!) informed the assembled wisdom of Manhattan that this *World's Fair* was a second edition of the Congress of Vienna, to enslave America, and re-rivet the fetters of Europe. This tremendous intelligence — coming on such authority, too — utterly stupifies and bewilders us; in popular phraseology, it “throws us all off the hooks.” We are petrified at such an exhibition of human depravity. To think that these kings and kaisers should make such an attempt in an age which has penny papers, and Paine’s Gas, and the Rochester Spirits, and so many means of diffusing virtue and intelligence! Where *do* they expect to go to? We can only exclaim in the memorable words of Julius Cæsar to Oliver Cromwell: *Quousque, Catilina, abutere patientiâ nostrâ?*

## THE WEEK OF THE COUP D’ETAT.

Literary World, January 1852.

*MONDAY, Dec. 1, 1851.* — To-night there is to be the first representation of a new opera at the *Comique*, “Blue Beard’s Castle.” “We will go and see it,” says the spokes-woman of our party.

Now, for my own part, I feel very little enthusiasm in the matter of first representations. Indeed, I would rather not see a new piece till the fourth or fifth night. By not going to first nights you escape a good deal of trash. You escape much disappointment for yourself,



and some painful sympathy with author, composer, manager, and artists. Neither the piece nor the audience has fair play the first night; it is too like a last rehearsal — only in public instead of in private. Accidents frequently occur, always jarring, often ridiculous. On the production of *La Perle du Brésil* last week, the tenor inadvertently represented good King Dagobert; he appeared with his continuations wrong side out, and could hardly walk, as may be supposed, to say nothing of the ludicrous figure he cut. But *ce que femme veut*, &c., so we posted off to the Comic Opera, but were too late in the field. "Not one place," said the clerk, before I could open my mouth to ask, or indeed was fairly inside the door. Forthwith a small crowd of enterprising speculators beset me, with offers of stalls and boxes, but I turned a deaf ear to them. Money goes fast enough in Paris without paying these gentlemen a hundred per cent. profit. Something must be done, however, to console the ladies. The plot of the *Perle du Brésil* is manifestly absurd, but the music is Félicien David's; it ought to be good. So up we plod to the *Boulevard du Temple*, "a weary, weary way to go," especially for a man in a misfitting pair of American boots, and just recovering from a sprained ankle. Plenty of room here; it looks as if the experiment of an opera in the St. Antoine quarter was not remarkably successful.

2½ P. M. — Mount Bay Harry, and off to the *Château Madrid* — not exactly the resort for a family man, but I have a business appointment with a person who is not to be found anywhere else at this hour, and whom I cannot go to see at any other. While we are arranging our affair (to prevent any misconception, it should be remarked that the person is of the same sex with myself), Brion's best barouche drives up with a great splash, a four-in-hand before it, dapple-greys and bright bays chequered à l'*Americaine*, three of my beloved countrymen inside, and a fourth driving. Certainly our people are born whips. This young gentlemen — I call him *young gentleman*, for he is some years my junior — where should he have learned to drive? He is a stockbroker, a regular Wall-street man; his professional experience would naturally bring him into contact with bulls and bears, and lame ducks, and other creatures, but not with



the noble animal. But is he anything else? Yes, a colonel of militia; and that one fact ought to give him a patent for not knowing anything about a horse. Yet there he is, tooling along that team as if he had been a stage-coachman all his life. Brion's son is on the box with him — in as neat a groom's livery, by the way, as I ever saw, even in England — and it is a tight race between them which can handle the horses best, though the colonel never saw them before to-day.

I have been meditating this morning on the Parisian *Lorettes* and *femmes entretenues*. Accident has lately given me considerable opportunities of studying these interesting classes of Parisian society. Yes, *accident*, reader mine; the word is not put in out of prudery or conventionalism; it was pure accident; a man who has a passion for horses will find that they sometimes involve him in the acquaintance of some other branches of the animal kingdom before he knows it. And from the little I have seen, it already ceases to be matter of wonder with me that so many of my young countrymen (and, I suspect; so many young Englishmen too) go to the devil with four post horses in this gay capital. If I were to say that these "ladies fair and free" have better manners in public, more reserve, more dignity, a better style altogether than half the women of "our set," dear Gotham would be up in arms against me, and I should never dare to show my face there again. If I were to say that they dress better, walk better, sit better, are more at their ease in company, have more the air of women born to wear pompadour silks and do nothing than the majority of English ladies, an indignant British public might rise against me as one man. So I shall merely say that they are exquisitely got up, elegantly mannered, and — in the presence of third parties, which must be supposed to be the extent of a moral man's experience of them — behave with perfect propriety.

Why do I dwell on this topic even for a moment? Because there is a real moral in it — a moral very consoling to us brethren of the quill, who are "nothing if not" literary, and do not over-affect drawing-room people, and whom the said drawing-room people are wont to sneer at in their worldly wisdom, perhaps superciliously to denominate *snobs*. It is this; *the utter worthlessness of*



*external refinement, as a test or sign of moral cultivation and real progress towards the highest aims of civilized life.* Ponder upon it, O reader! it is worth considering. \*\*\*

A representative for Paris has been elected to-day. There came to me a ticket on Saturday in my copy of the *Corsaire*, putting me in mind of such things at home. I wonder who is chosen. It is Devinck by a large majority. This, and a reported duel between M. Carlier, ex-Prefect of Police, and M. Lavoest, ex-Director of the Gobelins (probably a *canard*), are the most interesting items of political news. \*\*\*\*\*

Well, certainly the *Pearl of Brazil* is the greatest trash in the way of plot. There never was anything more incoherent, unsatisfactory, without motive throughout. But the music is some compensation; not that I would exactly endorse what the possibly *subventioned* critic of the *Corsaire* says of it that it is "full of great beauties, charming melodies, and ravishing details;" but it is sufficiently pretty (though at times a little noisy for so small a house), never tiresome, and worth a dozen of Halévy's operas any time. Duez, as *the Pearl*, looks and sings very sweetly; but why is it necessary for her to wear such short petticoats (particularly as her ankles are nothing to brag of), or to go to sea in full ball dress?

The audience is not the least amusing part of the spectacle. It is an opera public corresponding to the theatre public of the *Porte St. Martin*. There are plenty of blouses in the pit, and some in the uppermost tier of boxes; a hard-looking set; and the respectables about us have the air of being driven this way by want of funds (the prices are just half those of the *Academy* and the *Italiens*), or like ourselves by stress of first representation.

*Tuesday, Dec. 2d.* — Rather fatigued by last night's *Brazilian Pearl*, and feeling inclined to put it in the same category with *Mexican opals*, I sleep heavily till past nine, nor should I wake then, but our loquacious and peppery cook intrudes upon my slumbers a full hour before the usual time, alleging as an excuse for this anticipation that if she goes to market later she may meet with a musket ball. "A musket ball!" "Ah, you in your bed there little know what is going on."

The Chamber is dissolved, and they have written



"*Lodgings to Let*" over the door. Thiers, Cavaignac, Changarnier, and Lamoricière, are in prison. The city is in a state of siege, and all the troops marching in from the provinces. Exit cook. So! I told the editor of the *Knickerbocker*, when we took leave of each other, that I was going to Paris to see the next revolution; but verily it has come a leetle sooner than I expected. Hallo, Désiré! what's all this row about?

The valet confirms all Marie's report, with the additional pleasing intelligence that we are prisoners in the house, no one being permitted to pass in or out. (So much for living in a fashionable situation, next door to the President, or Prince, or Emperor, or whatever he is now.) My Irish-American groom, on attempting to sally forth, and nearly walking over the two little sentinels who tried to stop him, was surrounded by a platoon of twenty-five men, and just on the point of being taken, dead or alive, to the guard-house, but the *com-cierge*, who is the special providence of all *locataires*, contrived to rescue him from the armed force. Well, we are in no hurry to go out till two; if the court is not clear then, we shall mount Bay Harry, and ride out at full gallop, like a besieged knight of the olden time; let any one stop us that can.

Enter James in a white heat. He swears that he is an American citizen (he was born in the heart of Killenny, and never took out his naturalization papers for fear of being called on to do militia duty, until he was obliged to apply for them in order to get a passport to come abroad), that he has been insulted by those (an extensive prefix of epithets more emphatic than complimentary) Frenchmen, that he will make it a national matter, and, moreover, carry his knife and stick it into the first beggar that lays hands on him. I tell him if he does, he will infallibly be shot, without benefit of clergy or trial, and that he had better hold his tongue and mind his business, like the rest of us. This said, I go to breakfast, for man must breakfast, revolution or no revolution; and after the morning meal is despatched, and that rare luxury in Paris, a good American cigar, lighted, I proceed to a front window and reconnoitre. Our *salon* looks out on the *Avenue Gabriel*, right alongside the *Champs Elysées*. We can see one corner of the



President's grounds, where sentinels are always posted. They are not posted there only now, but at every corner, before every house, almost before every tree. They are stopping all who approach within a not very definitely marked distance of the executive mansion, and turning back men, little boys, women with baskets, and every one, not without profuse gesticulation and remonstrances in more than one instance. Hark! there is a shout of men and a trampling of horses. Here comes a body of cavalry at a good hand gallop, and — if that is n't Louis Napoleon! riding like a centaur, as he always does, his pet chestnut prancing superbly, as if conscious of carrying Cæsar and his fortunes. He looks bilious, as a man may, after sitting up all night; aware of his peril too, but resolute to meet it. "*Vive l'Empereur!*" cry the cortège of pedestrians; off goes the well known silvery-plumed hat, and the Emperor *in posse* bows to the crowd, and smiles to his officers. On sweep the horsemen, the runners are left behind, but their shouts continue, *Vive la —*. No, it can't be. Yes, but it is, though. *Now that he is gone by*, they are crying *Vive la République!* How jollily French!

It is just past eleven. Desiré reports the state of siege raised so far as concerns our house. I sally out, and naturally make first for the Legation. The Secretary has not been at home since eight. The *attaché* is very polite, but his manner clearly intimates that he has quite enough to do without talking gossip to curious compatriots, and that he will be more glad of my company on some *future* occasion. I take the hint and evaporate. The long, narrow, winding street of the *Faubourg St. Honoré* is densely crowded — coats and blouses, men, women, and children, lots of soldiers and police sergeants of course. The armed force generally seem to think it a capital joke. Not a man of them but looks as if he would like no better fun than to attend the execution of Thiers, and bayonet a few thousand Socialists afterwards. Through the broad gates of the *Elysée* you can see numerous carriages of various kinds, private equipages, job *coupés*, some very Lorette-like broughams, as if a portion of the President's fair friends had come to take refuge with him, or were about to decamp. The crowd thickens as you approach the Boulevards. Plenty



of foreigners, plenty of women, plenty of carriages and omnibuses. Just as I emerge upon the *Rue de la Concorde* my name is ejaculated near me. It is an old Cantab friend just arrived in time to see the sport. We stop to shake hands, and an officer starts us along with '*Marchez!*' — the last edition I suppose of the old established *circulez*. G— has just been the whole length of the Boulevards, and seen nothing remarkable. We turn back to the *Champs Elysées*, and after five false starts, many of the streets being blocked up by the military, find ourselves there at last. A double line of cuirassiers extends all the way up to the *Arc d'Etoile*. There are very few lookers-on; the interest is concentrated elsewhere. We go back to our quarters and I give G— a practical explanation of the American phrase *taking a horn*. Then he talks of going to his embassy. I suggest that, judging from my own experience at mine, as well as reasoning on general principles, he had better stay away. So he betakes himself to his apartments, and I start on my daily ride. The *Bois de Boulogne* is almost empty of equipages, though there is still a fair sprinkling of equestrians in it.

Let the opera be sung though the heavens fall. If the globe tumble in pieces, the ruins will strike the Parisians at a *spectacle*. To-night we *assist*, as the vile penny-a-line phrase of the day is, at the debut of a new tenor in *Ernani*, with Cruvelli the heroine. Were I to give my opinion of these artistes (which, being diametrically opposed in *both* points to the general opinion here, is probably not worth much), it would be that there are several sopranos about quite equal to Cruvelli, and that no living tenor except Mario comes anywhere near Guasco. There is a very good house, though not absolutely a crowded one; everything looks so *en routine* that if the President should appear in his box there opposite us, it would not surprise me in the least. I intimate as much to a friend who has joined us. "Ah," says he, "if you had been where I was half an hour ago, you would n't take it so quietly. All along the Boulevards they are crying *Vive la Republic! A bas le Dictateur!* One man jumped on a bench and shouted *A bas Napoleon!* Instantly nine or ten police sergeants pounced upon him to drag him off; the rush was such from different quarters, that



he was kept stationary among them for a moment. In that moment the nearest twenty bystanders closed upon the policemen; they did n't say a word, but the way they hustled them was a caution. The prisoner vanished, and the sergeants were glad to get off with the loss of their man."

The cavalry left the *Champs Elysées* at five this afternoon. I met them going up the Neuilly road as I came in from my ride. But the bivouac fires of the foot-soldiers are burning clearly when we return home after the opera.

*Wednesday, December 3d.* — So full two hundred members were arrested at once, and the chamber is most dissolved; they have pulled down the room it used to meet in. That is making a clean sweep; but public opinion seems to justify it. Everything is quiet: there are but two doubtful signs. One, that all the tradesmen are sending in their bills; if you owe a man two francs for work done yesterday, he is after his money. The other, that only *eight* papers (and most of these semi-official) continue to be published. Still with these the newsmen reap a rich harvest, selling for half a franc, and sometimes even for a franc, what costs them eleven centimes.

The Sun of Austerlitz, which was due yesterday, but only shone metaphorically then, is out in actual splendor to-day. I turn out my American-built phaeton and drive up the Boulevards. Everything wears an everyday appearance, except the extraordinary allowance of soldiers, and the people do not take much notice of them. What they do notice is my phaeton, and the horses in their cobweb harness are stared at as if they were wild animals. Circulating orders are less strictly enforced than yesterday, otherwise I might be taken up, trotters and all, for causing a stoppage. *Quere*, would an English, or Scotch, or American crowd, politically circumstanced as these people are, stop to look at Cleopatra's galley or a team of fiery dragons?

It is singular; there seems to be no opposition worth mentioning; a little talk — very little even of that. The citizens generally look very much pleased at what has happened. As to the cries last night, a few hundred turbulent individuals can make a great deal of noise. Will Louis Napoleon, then, have it so easily and abso-



lutely his own way? Suppose he should not — if the army were to prove unsound after all; if the provinces were to march against Paris (though that would indeed be a new era in French history), what then? I think he would fight even to the death. Who can doubt his valor, when he has so many times braved, not merely danger, but what a Frenchman dreads infinitely more than danger — ridicule? Then consider what a prize he has to contend for! Power hardly limited, in fact; wealth, pomp, and luxury scarcely even limited in name. Put yourself in his place once — suppose you had enjoyed for three years what he has enjoyed — his palace, his stables, his seraglio, his flatterers — for three years, not long enough for any of these pleasures to pall upon you; just long enough for them to become habitual and in some sort necessary — all at once you are menaced with the loss of them all, ay and disgrace, perhaps exile, into the bargain. Would you not fight? Would you not move Acheron, if you could not bend the gods above? No, you say, I would not break my word; I would not shed blood, even worthless blood, for a few years' more enjoyment of the temporal gauds you mention. Very well, reader. Perhaps, reader, you and I would not fight for these things. We have no abiding city here. We will take the goods the gods provide, and when fortune frowns we will wrap ourselves up in our virtue. We would fight for our wives and children, for our religion if the Papist or the infidel menaced it, for our God and for heaven. Well, Louis Napoleon is fighting for his God and his heaven. For the voluptuary's heaven is on this earth; he has his good things now.

Whether then we look at the favorable or unfavorable side of his character, I think the President is safe to fight; but it does not look much as if he would have any such necessity. Many of my countrymen are of a different opinion. They are sending for their passports by dozens; but nothing to the way in which *les Milords Russes* are beginning to send. Still fewer people in the *Bois de Boulogne* to-day than yesterday.

No theatres to-night. A French friend calls upon us, a gentleman of the old school, in all respects the reverse of *la Jeune France*, which, be it said without hesitation, is much worse than Young New-York in Young



New-York's worst points, more slangy, more rude, more vicious, less manly, less able to discriminate between ladies and actresses. One of the regular Faubourg St. Germain set, he is of course a legitimist. I offer him some bad negus (made of St. George) and some good cigars; after he has smoked five of them he lets out his ideas about the present state of things. "*M. le President* has caught us nicely, and the Orleanists as well. We have to elect between the humiliation of a Dictatorship and the danger of our throats being cut by the Socialists. It is a melancholy choice; still there can be no doubt as to the alternative to be preferred."

It seems the President received as usual on Monday night. The company did not leave till after eleven, and he was visible himself till after ten. Between midnight and six next morning the blow was struck.

*Thursday, December 4th.* — Tradesmen continue to pour in with their bills, all wearing long faces and complaining that their workmen are leaving them. I sit down to indite a long letter home, not without considerable doubts of its reaching its destination, at least till one or two mails after the proper time. At noon come fearful rumors of mutiny in the provinces and barricades in the city. I rush out and meet a diplomatic friend who in the excitement of the moment has forgotten his diplomatic caution. He says the scene on the Boulevards last night was terrific. As the squadrons of lancers passed along, they were half followed half surrounded by a dense crowd, shouting, or rather growling, *Vive la République! A bas les tyrans!* till the hoarse roar fairly drowned the noise of the horses' feet. Two artillery men were dragged from their *sourgon*, and all but torn to pieces before the troops could rescue them. Several isolated acts of violence on the part of the populace were checked by shooting the aggressors down like dogs. Barricades are up at this moment in the old traditional places, and the fight has begun in earnest.

Meanwhile everything in this quarter maintains its ordinary appearance. All the soldiers, except the usual allowance of sentinels about the executive mansion, are gone; their presence is doubtless required elsewhere. Except a couple of thundering proclamations (and those not printed in very large type or posted very conspicuously)



there is nothing within a quarter of a mile of us which could lead a stranger to suspect that less than two miles off a murderous conflict is raging.

But so goes the world. "One half of it knows not how the other half lives." Strangely insufficient expression! How many people really know — I do not ask how many gossips pretend to know — how their neighbors live? what they are saying, and doing, and meditating. Here is a man that calls you his friend, and you call him yours. You were at school together and travelled half over Europe together. You drive him out behind your new trotter, and he gives you a dinner at Delmonico's. He praises your book, and you swear by his wine. He votes with you at elections, and you depend on his judgment in hiring a house. You lent him money when he was cornered in Harlem stock, and he kicked Storey Hunter for speaking ill of you. If somebody were to say that he is not your friend, you would show that somebody the door very soon. Three days ago this friend of yours was making desperate love to your wife; it is no fault of his that she did not run away with him. You are banqueting at the *Anglais* with Tom Edwards and Gerard Ludlow and Harry Masters — a jolly *partie carrée* — drinking *Romanée gelée* like water, wondering what Frank Sumner is doing in New-York, and regretting his absence. To hear your companions talk you would think the only thing to be regretted on earth at this moment is that Frank Sumner is not here to taste this *filet à la Milanaise*. A few hundred yards off some luckless mechanic is starving, some girl is selling her honor to save her own and her mother's life, some bankrupt speculator is preparing to blow his brains out. But why multiply instances of what every one knows if he will give himself the trouble to think of it? It is all in accordance then with the way of the world that I go straight to the coach-maker's and give directions how the wheels of my wagon are to be repainted, *rouge clair filets bleu foncé*, just as if the Parisians were not killing one another almost within hearing. And then I stop in the *Rue Castiglione* to have a little cane mended.

Thus far the shops are all open, but on crossing the *Place Vendôme*, the signs of trouble are beginning to manifest themselves in the rapidly closing shutters. Of the



two very stringent proclamations already alluded to, that relating to the non-circulation of carriages is but partially regarded, that bidding the citizens to stay at home utterly disregarded. Knots of people are at every shop door in the *Rue de la Paix*, and not a few on the *trottoir*, one group especially surrounding a coachman, who is relating how his carriage was taken from under his feet — to form a barricade, doubtless. The *Boulevard des Capucines* is thronged, but not a shop open. Horsemen pass to and fro continually. It is one, and having breakfasted very slightly, I feel decidedly hungry, but there is no chance of getting anything to eat unless I go home; all the confectioners are shut up. Here and there a cigar shop is open, and one or two druggists have their shutters down, as if looking out for the wounded. All the other shopmen have holiday perforce. Thus far the middle of the street is unobstructed, though there are not a great many carriages to be seen: but when we reach the *Rue Lafitte*, a line of infantry is drawn across from causeway to causeway just above the street, forbidding all passage, the causeways themselves being still left free for the circulation of foot passengers. Just below the street is ranged a corresponding line of citizens, coats and blouses intermingled; it looks as if they were facing the troops and ready to fight them at any moment, but in reality it is only to see as much as they can of what is going on above — which happens to be just nothing, owing to the sharp angle made by the boulevards at the *Rue Richelieu*. We double the angle and proceed with quickened step and heightened curiosity. The boulevards are neither crowded nor deserted — something between the two; there are perhaps about one third as many people on the *trottoirs* as there would be on an ordinary day. The troops (infantry) occupy the middle of the street. We pass the *Rue Faubourg Montmartre*. This usually crowded thoroughfare is almost empty, but many curious eyes are turned down it. The object of attraction is an overturned carriage, perhaps the very one that was "pulled from under the feet" of our friend in the *Rue de la Paix*, the commencement of an interrupted barricade. Six soldiers are guarding it reverently, walking round it at a respectful distance, with arms presented as if they still expected it to explode with socialism, Trojanhorse fashion.



Three streets further and our progress is stopped — *Passe pas!* A line of sentinels stretches clear across from house to house. I form part of an irregular rank of curious spectators averaging three deep, and crowding as near to the *Rue Faubourg Poissonnière* as the armed force will let us approach. Every few minutes the roll of the musketry comes up upon the wind. "They are fighting on the *Porte St. Denis*," says the man next me in a half whisper. "How long have they been at it?" "An hour and a half" — that is to say since half-past twelve, for it is now about two.

By and by comes a startling cannonade: we can see the smoke of it, but the down-ward slope of the ground beyond us prevents our seeing any more. The general opinion of those around is that the troops are getting the worst of it, or at any rate have not made any progress in subduing the insurgents. As if to confirm this, they suddenly advance upon us and drive us back two streets — to the *Rue St. Fiacre*. Are they obliged to retreat then? Louder swells the roar of the cannon in answer.

It shall never be said that there was a fight going on within half a mile of me, and I came no nearer seeing it than this. The back streets are clear, so I dive down the nearest, and make for the *Porte St. Denis* as nearly as I can calculate. Several persons are going in the same direction; through the cross lanes we catch glimpses of the soldiers on the *Bonne Nouvelle*. Suddenly they warn us back. My companions obey, but I watch my time and dodge past like an man caught in a shower trying to run between the drops. I have the *Rue de la Lune* to myself. *Corragio!*

All at once up starts a sentinel from somewhere, and without word or gesture of warning lets fly at me. The first impulse of a civilian, a man who has not been used to stand fire, under such circumstances, is to run; and run I did with a will till I found myself at the place whence I had started. Then my courage began to return. Probably the soldier only fired in the air; certainly the ball did not come near me. "It will never do to give it up so, Mr. Brown." I make another shy down the *Rue Beauregard*. This time an adventurous Frenchman accompanies me.



There was no one in the other street but myself; there is no one in this street but myself and the adventurous Frenchman who takes the lead of me. We push on, and are soon rewarded for our daring with a sight of the *St. Denis* barricade — one angle of it at least — a great wall of paving stones, equal in thickness to the width of the *Rue Beauregard*. Scarcely have we observed this when a flash issues from the very centre of the barricade (neither soldier nor insurgent was seen to fire it), and the succeeding report is responded to by the crash of glass in a window alongside us. It is now a tight race between myself and my extempore companion; after a sharp brush of three or four blocks (as we should say in America) we bring up from sheer exhaustion not far from the *Rue Vivienne*. I shall wait for the barricades to come to me next time, and you may bet a hat that he won't go near them again to-day!

Every shop in the *Vivienne* is shut, but the street is thronged with citizens. Not a soldier or policeman to be seen. Groups talking at all the corners. I join one; a Napoleonist and Republican are disputing, the latter seems to be getting the best of it, at least he has the sympathies of his audience with him. *C'est vrai; Vive La Republique!* shouts a Grisetite at the close of his last emphatic period. *Vive La Republique!* echo three fourths of the bystanders, and the friend of law and order sneaks off; then, as two or three well dressed men are seen approaching, the assemblage dissolves itself instinctively, and its component individuals walk noiselessly away.

This being shot at makes one hungrier than ever. The nine *employés* of *Felix pâtissier*, are standing at his door. The windows are shut, but the door is open, and I have a vision of tarts. I rush frantically and devour whatever I can first lay hands on, ingurgitate a glass of what the French call Madeira, make a hero of myself to the neat little woman who supplies my wants, and then walk home leisurely. It is halfpast three, the Boulevards are full of cavalry hastening to the scene of action. At the corner of the *Place de la Concorde*, a little brougham — the only carriage I have seen for two hours — drives rapidly by; the little woman in it looks nervous enough. Her set don't profit by revolutions.

I mount Harry, for trotting in the *Bois de Boulogne*



is assuredly better than being shot at in the city. But the *Bois* is a perfect desert; no one throughout the whole length and breadth of it except two grooms exercising horses. Not a waiter or a boy to hold horses at Madrid, so little hope have they of any company to-day.

My brother-in-law rejoins me at dinner. From a friend's fourth story on the Boulevards he has seen some sharp fighting, plenty of insurgents shot, and a few officers unhorsed. Later in the day he came near experiencing more of the revolution than he wanted. A despatch rider had gone over a child near the *Rue de la Paix*, killing it on the spot. The people around naturally expressed much indignation, which was proceeding to manifest itself in something stronger than words, when a charge of lancers swept the streets, trampling down everything in the way without mercy, and the biggest man of the troop made a point of riding over Henry. But an American is not used to this sort of thing in his own country, and not at all disposed to take it quietly. Hal collared the lancer at once, that is to say he caught the horse by the curb, and very nearly jerked the lancer over, horse and all. At that time these soldiers did not carry their pistols ready cocked as they did afterwards, and the distance was too close to use the lance; so while the man was trying to shorten his weapon with one hand, and fumbling at his holster with the other, Henry dodged under the nose of another horse, and made his escape down a passage where several other non-combatants had already taken refuge. No sooner was he there than he discovered it to be a *cul de sac*, and the pleasant reflection flashed upon him that the soldiers might spit them all at their ease. Luckily they were contented with clearing the street, and did not attempt to pursue the fugitives into corners.

Fortified by a good dinner, I sally out again in the evening. There is some difficulty in getting to the Boulevards from the number of sentinels in this quarter, but when once there you may walk up and down them all night without meeting anything remarkable. I did for two good hours. There were many little knots of people, but as they gave no symptoms of violence, no notice was taken of them by the troops. One young man in a blouse is defending the soldiery to a tolerably attentive



audience. He has been a soldier himself, and knows that soldiers must obey orders. It is their pleasure as well as their duty. "If you had a patron that supported you, would you be so base as not to do what he told you?" His logic may not be first-rate, but his earnestness is indisputable. *Patries* are selling at various prices, from half a franc to a franc, and the purchasers anxiously reading them by twilight. Nobody seems to believe *any* of the reports from the provinces; the official announcement, and the Socialist reports, meet with about equally general discredit. Lancers with cocked pistols guard the *Rue St. Fiacre*, and all the Boulevards above are occupied by the troops, but there is no sign of fighting or firing.

*Friday, Dec. 5th.* — A misty and threatening day, quite enough to dissipate any possible chance of the insurgents rallying. I read the account of yesterday's fight in *Galignani*, and then ride up to the Boulevards. They are nearly full of cavalry, but carriages are permitted to pass, and are passing. A broken *fourgon* lies near the *Maison Dorée* — shivered windows and shotmarks on the houses. We must come back on foot and examine it more closely. We do so after breakfast. There is a great crowd; the sentinel lancers, with their cocked pistols, two at each corner, will not allow any person to stop a moment, so you have to look as you walk. It is singular that the three *Cafés* (*Paris*, *Tortoni* and *Maison Dorée*) about which and in which there was so much fighting, show scarcely a mark of it. The first house that looks at all the worse for the row, is the *Petite Jeannette*, where I used to buy gay cravats; after that, the large building just beyond the *Variétés*. This house, partly occupied by the *Fraternal Insurance against Fire and Explosions*, whose chrysographed title extends all across the front of it, has been pretty well exploded, as far as its windows are concerned, and the fire of the artillery has knocked a pretty big hole in the second story. People are staring at this hole as well as the soldiers will let them, while from one of the seventh-story windows a gentleman in a seedy dressing-gown looks down upon the crowd with an air that says, "I had a finger in yesterday's pie." The worst marks of the conflict are on the *Poissonnière*, just before the *Rue*



*St. Fiacre*. Billecoq's shawl warehouse has a large hole in its front, and the house next below (separated from it by a passage) nearly as large a one in its side. I had almost forgotten a bit of unintentional allegory at that great ready-made clothing shop, *Le Prophète*, on the upper end of the *Montmartre*. The ornamented blinds representing the different personages of Meyerbeer's opera, had been all rolled up out of the way. Only a little bit of one of them hung down, enough to let you read the legend "*Couronnement du Prophète*."

The military still prevent you from going *past* the *Rue St. Fiacre*, so I go *down* it, and then along the villainous looking and most inappropriately named *Beauregard*, quite at my leisure, and with plenty of company. The soldiers stop us again before we reach the Boulevards, but let us come near enough to observe the *debris* of the *St. Denis* barricade, the scattered paving stones, the bare places in the pavement. In returning I note one house in the *Rue Petit Carreau*, just out of the *Beauregard*, which has evidently been the scene of a sharp conflict. The front, newly painted of a deep red, throws out the white shot-marks with startling distinctness.

I stay quietly at home to-night filling my journal. Another French friend drops in, and tells me, among various items of gossip, that at least *twelve hundred* people have lost their lives in the thirty-six hours preceding to-day, many of them innocent citizens, but *que diable allèrent-ils faire dans cette galère?* That would have been my epitaph if the sentinel or the Socialist had shot me yesterday.

*Saturday, Dec. 5th.* — At nine o'clock James comes to see me with a long face, to say that his French helper is missing, and has probably been arrested, but where or for what, or how he is to be got at, or what is to become of him, nobody knows. After several fruitless speculations we try the *laissez aller*, which answers in this instance; the boy makes his appearance at eleven. He slept last night in a house suspected of Socialism. The police made a descent about five in the morning, and took up all who were not regular lodgers, and some who were. Having been taken up without any particular reason, he was now discharged without any particular examination or caution. Pay some visits. All my



countrymen appear to have been shot at, but none of them confess to have been in the least degree frightened. The restriction on the circulation of vehicles is officially removed this morning: it was unofficially removed yesterday. Ride out at 3. The *Bois de Boulogne* is recovering its wonted crowd and gaiety. Remember that I forgot to pay for my liquor the other day in Madrid, and turn in there to discharge that ceremony. No end of compatriots on the ground; Dicky Bleecker and Harry Masters, and the Colonel and Edwards, and two or three more of "the boys." Masters has "been around a few" the last three days, and is "gassing" not a few about women run over, and houses invaded, and two hundred men massacred by the troops, and so on, when suddenly a little dark man whom nobody noticed, rises up before him from a corner. "Sare, I understand English; I am a French officer; you say what is not true."

*Mouemens divers* in the assembly. "And do you think," says Harry, turning short upon the interrupter, and swelling up to and over him like a high-actioned trotter, till he seems about to fall on him, and crush him to the earth, "do you think I will let any Frenchman or any other man, tell me in public that I say what is not true? *Donnez-moi votre adresse, Monsieur; voici la mienne,*" and he nearly gives the officer point in the face with his card.

The Frenchman is very cool, for a Frenchman; he begs Masters to talk English that the people of the house may not understand him, and takes him aside in the yard, not out of sight, however, or altogether out of hearing, for by and by there is something said about *police*, and then Harry gives the other an immense shove, "*Allez-vous en, canaille! Je croyais causer avec un officier et en gentilhomme, et vous me parlez de la police?*" Then returning to our party, he begins to swear in all the languages he knows, and to pour out much *Lingua Franca* on the enormity of his opponent's reference, addressing himself in his excitement chiefly to the waiter. The waiter seems disposed to stand by his best customers, for the Americans are great patrons of the Madrid brandy. My Kilkenny groom, and Harry's groom," (another "American citizen,") hang about, watching and hoping for a signal to pitch into some one. For a few minutes everybody



talks at once; then there is a lull; the French officer and our officer, the Colonel, who speaks the best French of the party, having been talking apart; they come forward again, and the Frenchman makes his excuses. It is all owing to his imperfect knowledge of English, and Harry's imperfect knowledge of French. He only meant at first to tell our countryman he was mistaken: he was wrong to have told him even that in public. The reference to the police was merely for the official returns of killed and wounded to fortify his statement. So we are all satisfied, and Masters asked him to take a drink, which he declines, and slides off very rapidly. Well he may, being rather in the minority here, for there are eight Americans on the ground, and only one other Frenchman, who has remained in a corner, looking very shaky through the whole affair.

Among other disastrous effects of the revolution, *La-borde's* is shut up (the great dancing-school of all Paris now; Edwards says it "knocks" Cellarius). To console "the boys" under this calamity, I ask them to an extempore supper. Young Empson the artist drops in. He has his story to tell.

"You know my *atelier* is close to the *Rue Faubourg Montmartre*, and I usually come to the Boulevards that way. Having been hard at work all Thursday morning, I did not get out till two, and was then surprised to find the usually crowded street utterly deserted and silent as the grave. Very soon a party of soldiers warned me back with guns presented. But I could n't stop on any account (I was going to see a real live patron who had given me an order for fifteen hundred francs' worth of picture), so I opened my *Talma* to show there were no arms under it, and approached them boldly. They allowed me to pass on, hearing my story; but after I had passed, whether they thought I did not move fast enough or whether it was only a bit of deviltry on their part, three of them levelled their pieces at me. Then I showed them a specimen of tall walking."

This mild narrative of the painter's sets every one's tongue agoing. Those who have not been shot at or half run over themselves know some one who has.

"Did anybody see Ludlow lately?" asked the Colonel. "He got into a nice fix, he did. Gerald had been



six times in Paris without seeing a barricade: so pretty early Thursday morning he walked up to the dangerous district to look for one. All at once he saw rather more of them than he wanted, for they sprung up all round him like magic; he was fairly walled in. Whichever way he turned it was *sauve qui peut, chacun chez soi*, charges of soldiery, volleys of musketry, men shot dead alongside of him, and such like pleasant incidents. He did n't dare to say he was not of that quarter for fear of being arrested, perhaps bayoneted, so he kept dodging about from house to house for just five hours. At length he found one street where the coast was clear, and down that he sloped pretty rapidly, and never stopped till he was in the heart of the St. Germain quarter. How he got over the Seine he doesn't know, can't tell which bridge he crossed, and isn't sure but he took the river at a jump flying."

"Appleton must have had the nicest time of it," says Bleeker. "He was all the morning in his office on the *Bonne-Nouvelle*, hard at work with his correspondence. (Thursday is packet day, you know.) As the clock struck three he had bundled up his letters, and was starting for the post-office, when the *porte-cochère* closed in his face, and then came a twenty-minutes' roll of musketry, about his very ears, it seemed. So he retreated to his apartment, and remained there three hours and more, listening to the musketry every quarter of an hour as it was fired near or *into* the house, with occasional interludes of cannon. Once the soldiers broke into the room next to his, and bayoneted twelve poor devils in it, non-combatants too, who had merely run in there to get out of the way. Appleton didn't know how soon his turn might come, so he prepared for action all the weapons about him — one six-shooter and one jack-knife — built a little private barricade of chairs and tables, and sat down behind it calculating how many of the armed force he might be able to sacrifice to his own *manes*. After all he got out just in time for dinner, and lost nothing but the mail, for the trouble was all over before half past six."

"How many people, I wonder, have been killed altogether?" inquired I, thinking of my French friend's twelve hundred. "The loss of the troops is said to be very small."



"Of course they will not acknowledge the real amount of it," said Empson. "I had experience of that at Raszczubud in 1848. *There* were something like barricades. One particular night I remember the Prussian troops only owned to losing about half a dozen, and I knew one man who shot twenty of them from one barricade."

The artist stopped and stroked his silky Teton-like beard. Finding his auditors properly attentive he continued:

"He was a Polish count, one of the Posen Poles, hating the Prussians by instinct, and fought like one who bore a charmed life. Conspicuous in person and dress, he would climb to the top of the barricade, receive the rifle handed to him from below, and take deliberate aim. He was a slow shot, but a dead one, and never fired without settling his man. Between midnight and five in the morning he killed twenty soldiers, one for every quarter of an hour. The Prussians thought him the devil incarnate, and were fairly panic-struck. But about dawn some thirty of them took courage with the light, stormed the barricade in flank, got round it, and put a dozen balls into him from behind. His corpse lay where it fell for two days. Well, as I was saying, the official reports only stated a loss of six or seven soldiers all over the town, and this one man in one place had killed twenty! I saw it myself, for my window happened to command the scene of action."

*Sunday, Dec. 7th.* — I go to the Lutheran church in the *Rue des Billettes*, a good half-hour's walk. The preacher is a most earnest man, with a powerful, homely eloquence, and now and then a touch of semi-irony almost Sydney-Smith-ian. Last Sunday he was preaching on the duty of ministers, and current misconceptions respecting it. "Many persons think that it is our business to perform certain ceremonies at which a certain form, and decorum, and propriety are desirable and requisite — to christen people, marry them, bury them; also to be the distributors of certain alms, the agents of the state in its charitable acts, a link to bind different classes of society together, a very respectable bureaucracy. Moreover, as it has been the custom for ages that the minister should make stated discourses, they expect that he *will* make a discourse about *quelque chose de bon*, and with



a certain eloquence and fervor; but that he should talk of the great truths of religion — the ruin caused by sin, the anguish of a soul in penitence, the mediation of Christ, the new life — they are *astonished* that he should dwell on these things, yea, even to a dying man, from whose eyes the veil that has long overshadowed them is so soon to be lifted. My friends, were you to express your surprise that we do not talk *enough* about these things, the accusation would be too true in many instances, and I could understand you; but when you profess astonishment at our talking of them *at all*, then I can only say your astonishment astonishes me very much, and methinks if the Apostles were here, they who used to preach the word in season and out of season, they would be astonished too at your astonishment — that they would. (*Ils s'étonneraient aussi, ces apôtres-là.*) To-day he was alluding to the startling events of the past week. His text was, "The Lord reigneth," and he took occasion to speak of those who refused to admit his reign. "These miserable men thought they could do without God (*se passer de Dieu*) and he has given them up to the dominion of their own folly. They would not keep his day of rest, and they have no rest or peace in themselves. They would not believe in Him, and they have no faith in one another. They would not love Him, and they hate one another. They would not seek the blessing from above, and they have lost the blessings of this world."

After church I walk up the *Rue du Temple*, just next to the *Billetes*. Notices are posted here in great numbers of the telegraphic despatches from the Provinces. It is quite striking to remark with what utter indifference these official announcements are always received. The people say the Provinces are quiet, *for otherwise some one would have brought the news by railroad*; no one alleges the governmental despatches as any proof of the fact. Except these placards, there are no traces of the late "muss" till the corner of the *Rue Rambuteau*; one house there is utterly ruinous in the way of windows, the very sashes of the lower story being broken out; notwithstanding which, a small confectionery business goes on in it the same as ever. After this, all the way to the Boulevards you meet little patches of loose pavement



here and there, and the workmen busy restoring them. And so we come out on the Temple boulevard, just opposite the little Opera where we heard the *Perle du Brésil* last Monday. Not a sign of military occupation. There is rather more than the usual Sunday crowd, and rather less than the usual allowance of uniforms in it. Every shop open — every man, woman, and child looking gay and happy. A few saplings have been recently replanted, but that is an ordinary municipal repair which might happen any day in the year. It is not until after traversing the whole distance from the *Opera National* to the *Porte St. Martin* that I can detect a single shutter put up, or a single broken square of glass. I cannot realize to myself, I cannot make myself believe, that the Parisians were killing one another here three days ago. But on the *Bonne-Nouvelle*, War's iron heels have left some intelligible marks. There is much loose pavement about the *Porte St. Denis*; the railing of the little raised causeway on one side has vanished altogether; much of the masonry too is broken down, and the *debris* still lie as they fell. Opposite the *Gymnase* some houses are nicely scarred with shot. Yet there are but half a dozen of these; and even of broken glass there is far less than you would expect. To be sure it may have been mended in some places; at this moment there are twenty glaziers operating on the Aubusson dépôt. The chief damage seems to have fallen on those lovely ornaments of the Boulevards which the Parisians call *rambuteaux*. Every one of these is either shortened by the head, or altogether prostrated — a proof of more good taste on the part of the Socialists than one would have been disposed to give them credit for.

After our pedestrian circuit of seven miles, Henry and I start on our daily ride in the *Bois de Boulogne*. The fashionable promenade has recovered all its gaiety. The equipages are numerous as ever; the equestrians more than ever abundant. Every boy, every *calicot* that can hire or sit anything on four legs, is there; every foreigner that affects the noble animal is there — English, Russian, or American. The metropolis of pleasure is itself again. True, there are some rumblings of distant thunder, a little lurid light on the horizon, some distant departments in possession (temporary, we hope) of the



Socialist bands, some little *Jacquerie* going one somewhere. But order reigns at Paris, and Paris is France. *Vive Louis Napoleon! Vive l'Empereur!*  
*Paris, December 13.*

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## LITERARY LOAFINGS.

AFTER THE MANNER OF COMMERSON.

November 1858.

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I HAVE always thought Mrs. Stowe's "Uncle Tom" would have been a truer book if it had been written by her husband, for then her story would have been *history*.

There are some deformities which attract no particular attention, but a man born without feet must necessarily be a no-to-rious character.

If you want to travel cheaply, put up a clothes-line in your yard; you can then go to *your rope* whenever you please, and cross the line at a minute's notice.

The compositions of some authors seem to be called so on the same principle that an opiate is styled a composing draught.

Artists have adopted different emblems of charity. I wonder none of them ever thought of a piece of Indian-rubber, which gives more than any other substance.

A lady having to go to a strange place should set off at once without stopping to think, for the woman who deliberates is lost.

An argument in favor of a future state of existence may be drawn from the present existence of —. He is no use whatever in this world; there *may* be another in which he will be of some.

Marriage is the ordinary candle, less beautiful and picturesque than the *ignis fatuus* of love, but decidedly more useful and reliable.

The glory of the old European nations is like the shining of a corpse. Those who pass by at distance behold only the phosphoric light, they do not see the putrescent carcase which it surrounds.



If I have not fully seen the elephant, I have at least had a glimpse of his trunk. I found some of my writings in the lining of it lately.

The juvenile scion of Young America, smoking his ten or fifteen cigars every morning, irresistibly reminds me of the caterpillar, which consumes several times its own weight of leaves in a day.

It is difficult to transact any business with a miser. He is so averse to hospitality that he will not readily entertain even a proposition.

No tee-totaler can be consistent to the end. He may refuse wine all his life but must come to his bier at last.

It is common to speak of those whom a flirt has jilted as her victims. This is a grave error; her real victim is the man whom she accepts.

There is an Eastern tale of a magician who discovered by his incantations that the Philosopher's Stone lay on the bank of a certain river, but was unable to determine its locality more definitely. He therefore proceeded along the bank with a piece of iron, to which he applied successively all the pebbles he found. As one after another they produced no change in the metal, he flung them into the stream. At last he hit upon the object of his search, and the iron became gold in his hand. But alas! he had become so accustomed to the "touch and go" movement that the real stone was involuntarily thrown into the river after the others, and lost to him forever. I think this story well allegorizes the fate of the coquette. She has tried and discarded so many hearts that at length she throws away the right one from pure force of habit.

An itinerant preacher ought always to be a good logician. It will then be easier for him to convert the premises wherever he stops for the night.

Some men measure the value of governments by their patronage of art; on the same principle that "little Musgrave" in the ballad went to church, not to say his prayers, but to see the "fair women."

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On looking over these sketches, I detect some Americanisms, which I have nevertheless left as they are, for the sake of the local coloring. Thus *team* in America means *two* horses, not *four*; a chesnut horse is called a *sorrel*, &c.

Vol. IV. will <sup>be</sup> certain newspaper correspondence.





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19 1/2

**PIECES**  
**OF A**  
**BROKEN-DOWN CRITIC.**  
**PICKED UP BY HIMSELF.**

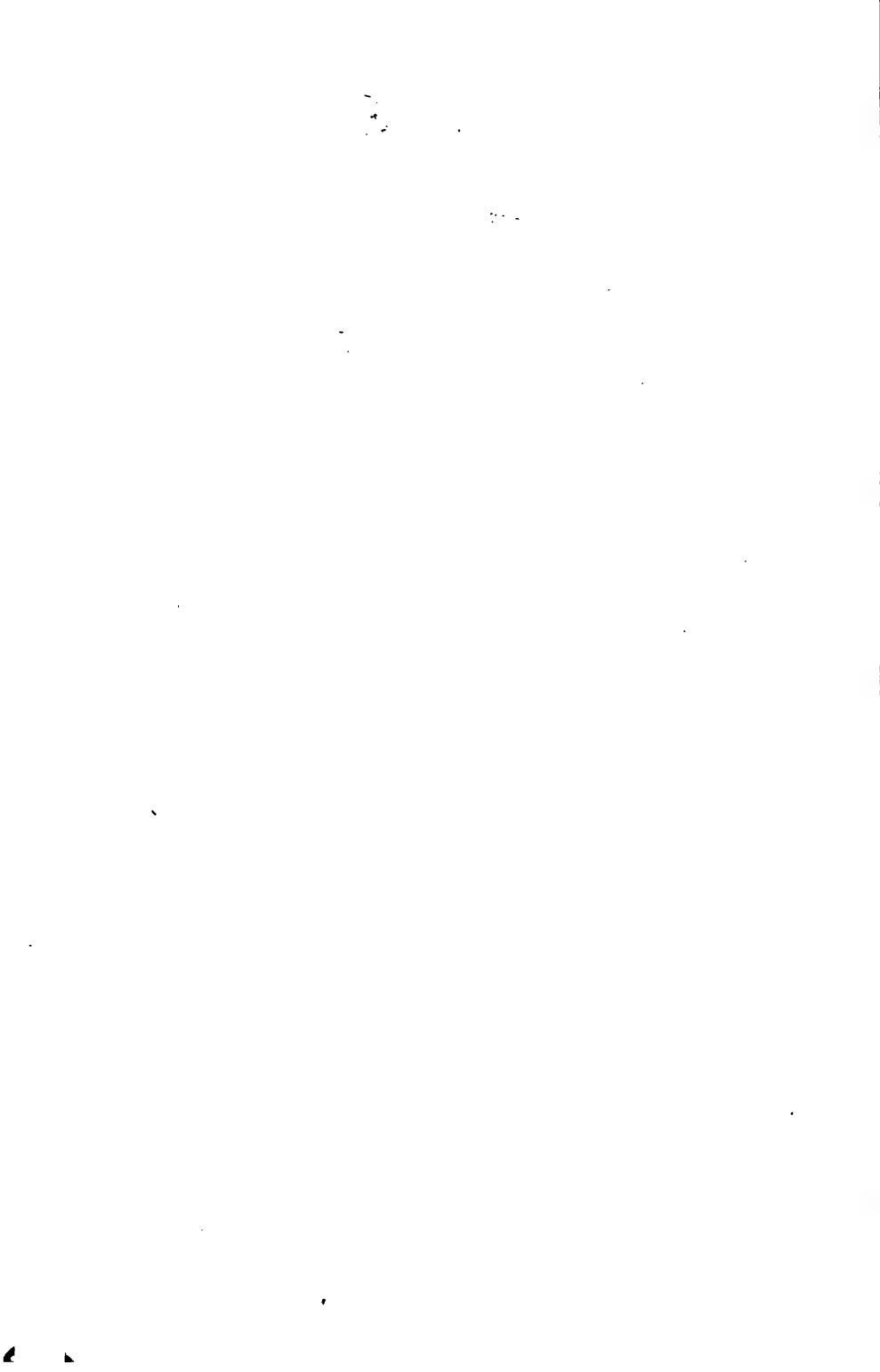
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**Vol. IV. LETTERS.**

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**.C. BADEN-BADEN.**  
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2

# PIECES

OF A

## BROKEN-DOWN CRITIC.

PICKED UP BY HIMSELF.

*Charles Henry Bristol*

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**Vol. IV. LETTERS.**

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1859.



1873, May 26.

Gift of  
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*Editors Gazette & Times: July 1847.*

GENTLEMEN: — I have been much surprised to see an extract from the Democratic Review “on the Origin of England’s National Debt,” copied into your paper without comment, which usually implies an endorsement of the doctrines contained in it. The writer, advising and predicting the repudiation of England’s public debt, insists on the non-obligation of that debt, because a great part of it was contracted by a former generation — that of William Pitt — and he says “Of 30 generations which passed away from the Norman Conquest down to the French War, each one had as much right to borrow as that of Mr. Pitt, and nearly every one had as much necessity.” At first blush this would seem to argue that a government has no right to borrow money at all, since every loan must be raised at some particular time, in some particular generation. But he can hardly mean this; it is too great an absurdity even for the Democratic Review to advocate. He must mean that they have no right to borrow for longer than a *generation*, that is, as he explains it, for 22 years.

Now, gentlemen, it seems to me that this plan of substituting for our conception of a *Nation* and a *State* that of a *succession of generations*, is not only one of the most disorganizing and ruinous in practice ever devised, but also one of the most illusory and intangible in theory. What is a generation? What permanent ties unite the Americans of this generation (humanly speaking) except such as are derived from their being members of a common Country and State? Take away this great bond and what have you to limit or define your generation? The writer can suggest nothing except his period of 22 years. 22 years *from when*, and *to when*? From to-day or to-morrow, or last year, or the time when the present voters or the majority of them came of age? How are we to draw the line between this generation and the last or the



next? We are the governing generation now. Those who are 15 or 20 years our juniors will be the governing generation when that time shall have elapsed. What right have we to bind them for 2 years or 7 years any more than for 20 or 30? The very term *generation* suggests ideas of what is fleeting and transitory and unstable; and the moment we attempt to carry out the general notion into particulars, all is confusion and incongruity.

On the other hand our conceptions of a *State* and a *Nation* are fixed and real. The term *Nation* involves physical and moral peculiarities, a definite locality, generally a peculiar language, often a peculiar religion. The term *State* suggests the ideas of law and government, order and justice, treaties, courses of policy, improvements carried on from one age to another, all the things that are most grave and sacred and permanent in men's eyes. A state has a personality about it which you seek in vain to attach to a generation. You may open an account current with a government; you can't with a generation. True, a people may discover themselves to be wiser than their fathers. They may think, nay, they may know that in certain circumstances they would have managed their affairs more wisely. And so, too, a man may grow wiser and find that he has entered into indiscreet engagements and borrowed imprudently. But does this exonerate him from his engagements, I do not say in law, but in conscience and honor? He is still the same man, though his moral and mental nature may have been enlightened, and he is bound by his own acts. Similarly a people may be bound to pay the debts of their ancestors, even though they have reason to doubt the policy and justice of having originally contracted these debts.

So much for the general question; but the specific instance under discussion, demands more particular consideration. The assertion that nearly all the generations before Mr. Pitt had as much necessity to borrow money as he had, is just on a par with the usual impudent mendacity of our Radical scribblers. What the London Examiner said of O'Connell, is most strictly applicable to these men. Their moral nature has become so warped that they really do not know what truth is. With them it means *whatever makes for their side*, and by *falsehood* they understand whatever makes for the other side. Hence



they unscrupulously and invariably adapt their facts to their theory; will this writer pretend to say that from the Norman conquest to the French war, the national existence of England, was at stake once every 22 years! Or will he maintain that this was not the case in Pitt's time, when she had to fight single-handed against a continent? The exertions and sacrifices which the Englishmen of that day made, showed their appreciation of the danger which threatened them. Do men pay 10 per cent property-tax, without a pressing necessity? Does the Democratic Review suppose that every sovereign or premier between William the Conqueror, and George III. could have levied such a tax? I should like to see our good Democrats called on to pay 10 per cent property-tax on account of Mr. Polk's Mexican War! Those Englishmen did not spare their own shoulders and *they had a right to impose a burden on future generations, because future generations were interested in the struggle then pending.* It is a vile slander to say that Pitt and his generation were unjust to, or careless about, their posterity. They were most mindful of the interests of that posterity. They took care that they should be free Englishmen, not slaves to Napoleon and his dynasty; enlightened Protestants and not Papists or Infidels. The continuance of such blessings, the deliverance from such evils was cheaply purchased by the addition of a few millions or many millions of taxes. No, gentlemen, "every generation from the Norman Conquest to the French War," had *not* the same right to borrow as that of Mr. Pitt, *for none of them had the same necessity.*

Let us suppose for a moment that our position and that of Mexico in the present war were partially interchanged: that *our* territory was threatened with invasion, *our* armies with defeat; that there was a chance of our country being subjugated by Santa Anna and of our Protestant Ministers having Popish Priests set over them. Should we hesitate about any means of preserving our independence? Should we scruple to borrow money in any quarter to any amount that might be requisite for carrying on the war? Should we shrink from subsidizing foreign powers? And then suppose the philosopher of the Democratic Review to interpose with "No, you must not burden posterity! If you borrow this money your



grandchildren will have to pay double taxes for the interest of it." With what indignation should we repel his absurdities! "Miserable môle that you are," we might exclaim, "the question is not whether our grandchildren shall pay a few hundred dollars more or less taxes, but whether they should have any voice in paying their own taxes at all; whether they shall have a country and free institutions, or be the servants of strangers. Away with such short-sighted folly!"

The English people enjoy the glory of having resisted a continent like Europe and overcame a man like Napoleon. It was not to be expected that they should have this glory for nothing, nor are they unwilling to pay the price for it. They are not so foolish and so wicked as the Democratic Review hopes or believes them to be.

There is yet, however, one alternative which I had nearly forgotten. He of the Democratic may say that there is no objection to a nation *borrowing* all they can in such a crisis, but that the next generation may *repudiate the debt* if they see fit. But this course will be found on examination to be equally unjust to their *ultimate* posterity. For repudiation though it may answer very well for the first time, is not a game to be played twice. If the second generation repudiates what the first borrowed, the third will not find it easy to borrow again should they require it ever so much. And what more mortifying position can we imagine that of a generation which, with every honest intention and prospective means, finds itself so damned by the bad faith of its predecessors as to be incapable of obtaining credit? Thus in whatever light we view the question, it appears most clearly that the party which maintains the obligations of a State is the one truly mindful of the interests of posterity.

## TO the Honorable Horace Mann:

SIR,

Since even under the aristocratic governments of the Old World, a cat is proverbially permitted to look at a king, much more, in this land of democracy, may a private individual address without previous introduction



a Member of Congress. Undeniable is it, that our private individuals have not been slow to use and abuse this privilege, and numbers of them make it their business to bother public men on all occasions, in or out of season. Nor should I have been willing to follow so many bad examples, had you not, in some sense, yourself given the provocation.

Some two months ago I happened to see in the *Literary World*, a brief and complimentary notice of your "Thoughts for a Young Man," which mentioned your holding up Stephen Girard as an example, and John Jacob Astor as a warning. The latter gentleman was my maternal grandfather, and having been accustomed to look upon him during his life, and to regard his memory since his death, with a considerable amount of respect, I naturally felt a little curious to see what he had done to be held up as a warning, particularly what legal or moral crime he had committed to make you put him in the same category with the ferocious despot Nicholas, or that prince of swindlers, the ex-railroad king, George Hudson — as the same journal informed me you did. True, in the course of twelve years or more, during which time I had sufficient opportunities of becoming acquainted with his life and character, I had never seen or heard anything to induce the suspicion of such a probability; nevertheless, as it is notorious that we often learn a great deal about ourselves and our private affairs from strangers, it seemed not impossible that some such information might be obtained in the present instance.

Of Stephen Girard, I knew only that he had been the richest man, or one of the richest men, in the country; that he was a Frenchman by birth, but had lived most of his life — a very solitary one, without near relations or friends — in Philadelphia; that he left the greater part of his fortune to establish a college for orphans, into which no minister of any religious denomination was ever to set foot, under any pretext or circumstance whatsoever — which always struck me as a very ingenious contrivance for the increase of knowledge without virtue; and that the college had been but lately opened, after a delay of some fifteen years. Nor did I gain any further details from your "Thoughts." But I did learn the *gravamen* of Mr. Astor's offence in your



eyes, viz. that he did not leave more than one-sixteenth of his fortune for any public purpose; conduct, which you profess yourself unable to palliate or account for except on the supposition of absolute insanity, — (p. 65, *note*.)

Now, calling a man "insane," like calling him *scoundrel*, *rascal* or *vagabond* is a very convenient way to dispose of people whom we do not like, while we are unable to substantiate anything specific against them; but it is a weapon which cuts more ways than one, and the hasty or indiscreet resort to which it is somewhat dangerous to encourage. Different men have different ideas as to what constitutes this sort of insanity. For instance, when you make an abolition speech in Congress, the Southern and Southwestern representatives would doubtless be much delighted to shave your head and enclose you between the four walls of an asylum, and would be prepared with a wilderness of arguments, enough to convince themselves at least, if no one else, that you fully deserved such treatment. Or when, six or seven years ago, you took occasion in a public discourse to speak very disrespectfully of the ballot and universal suffrage, I will engage there was no want of persons who said you must be crazy to blaspheme institutions which to them were like an appendix to the Ten Commandments. A great many very sensible, though perhaps common-place people, agree in thinking that the Massachusetts transcendentalists have been made mad — whether by too much learning or not, they are less unanimous. I have no doubt we could find many devout men, who would say that, to found an institution for education from which all ministers of the gospel were systematically excluded, was little short of the act of a madman. In fine, there is a popular tendency to confound, by a loose use of language, *madness* with *unreasonableness* or *folly*; and in some cases to aggravate, in others to excuse actions, by assigning to them as a motive, insanity, when at most they can only come under the charge of irrationality, and very often are referable only to eccentricity or peculiarity. Yet the distinction is not so very subtle or metaphysical either — one would think it simple enough. You may say that a drunken man is mad for the time; that a very angry man is so too. Possibly, but you would surely



never say in any serious conversation or writing, that a man was *insane* according to any legal or medical sense of the term, because you had once seen him in a violent passion, nor yet because you had once seen him intoxicated. Every man who commits a crime, nay, every man who wittingly and deliberately commits sin, acts contrary to the dictates of reason, but such a man's mind is not, therefore, permanently disordered, otherwise, what a great madhouse the whole world would make! But the mention of *crime* leads me to the real cause of this abuse of words. The morbid sympathy shown by a certain class of philanthropists for criminals, and especially for the more atrocious criminals, such as murderers, has, among ways of screening such wretches from condign punishment, suggested the plea of insanity. In this our sentimentalists are greatly aided by the craniologists, many of whose speculations go directly to refer all great crimes to defective mental organization. The public mind thus becomes accustomed to associate with ideas of permanent insanity, individual acts of great wickedness or irrationality. A clever legal friend of mine seriously professes a theory that every person is a monomaniac, or mad upon some one point, by which he probably means to say that every person has a weak point on which he has a tendency or susceptibility to be led astray and a times act irrationally.

I suppose then, your saying that Mr. A.'s only excuse for leaving his fortune to his relations instead of to the public, is to be found in the supposition of his insanity, — is only a characteristically exaggerated way of expressing that you think he made a foolish and unreasonable disposition of it. Mr. Girard, on the contrary, is lauded with equal extravagance for the establishment of his college to promote irreligious education among orphans, as opening a fountain of blessedness so copious and exhaustless that it will flow on undiminished to the end of time — (p. 64.) To judge of the value and justice of this condemnation and this laudation, it will be necessary to look at the lives and circumstances of the two men, very briefly, but rather more in detail than you have done.

I have taken the trouble to make myself somewhat acquainted with the history of Mr. Girard, and more



particularly with the history of his college since his death. The difficulty of procuring the necessary documents has delayed for many weeks the appearance of this little epistle, which would otherwise have been laid before you a few days after your book fell into my hands.

Stephen Girard was a native of France, but a citizen, and for many years a resident of Philadelphia. He was a bachelor, and had no near relatives except a brother, with whom he was not on the best terms. He lived unsocially, and was as frugal of the ordinary courtesies of life as of his gold. As a merchant and banker, he accumulated a large fortune, variously estimated, but certainly not less than seven or eight millions of dollars. It does not appear that he ever entertained the idea of distinguishing himself in any other walk of life. Dying without intimate friends, he left his whole property, with the exception of a few trifling legacies, to establish a college for orphans, *within the premises appropriated to which no ecclesiastic, missionary, or minister of any sect whatsoever, is ever to be admitted for any purpose.*\* The plan, material, and dimensions of the collegiate buildings were most particularly specified, but insuperable architectural difficulties prevented these directions from being carried out to the letter. To support the roof of the main building, it was necessary to erect a portico of Corinthian columns — a lucky necessity, as it enabled the architect to convert a very plain into a very splendid exterior. For fifteen years the college was in embryo, owing partly to these architectural difficulties, and partly to others, some of which I cannot find prominent allusion to in any of the reports or documents emanating from the institution. There have been rumors of obstinate and protracted litigations, but since about these *κλέος οἶον ἀκούμεν*, I know nothing about them except from hearsay, we may pass them briefly over. One might suspect without being very superstitious, that these delays were the first judgment of the Almighty on an institution established in defiance of him. At any rate, let one thing be borne in mind, — the college has only been in operation two years. All your fine talk therefore about „opening a fountain of blessedness,” &c. is quite gratuitous, being

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\* See the ninth subdivision of the twenty-first clause of his will.



founded, not on any actual experience or observation of the workings of this particular instance, but on the general assumption, that the acquisition of knowledge or mental improvement must necessarily in all cases be a blessing, which is notoriously a disputed point. If we come to *a priori* reasoning on the matter, it might be urged with quite as much plausibility, that an educational institution based on such a principle as the systematic exclusion of all definite Christianity, could not, from its very nature, prosper. Indeed, this clause has been a great stumbling block to the various eulogists of Mr. Girard, and it is painfully amusing to see the various attempts they make to gloss it over. They lay great stress on the fact, that he does not express any hostility to Christianity, but only a fear of the "clashing doctrines" and "controversy" of "such a multitude of sects." Now, as Christianity is made up of the various denominations of Christians, this is something like cutting off a man's limbs piecemeal while professing not to hurt the man himself. The children are to be brought up "sober, truthful, industrious," "according to the purest principles of morality;"\* there is nothing said about their being brought up *Christians*, and certainly they are *not* to be brought up according to the tenets of any denomination or denominations of Christians, all such teaching being stringently excluded from the college. And as all Christians belong to *some* denomination, if Mr. Girard intended that his scholars should be Christians, either he must have looked forward to their constituting a sect of their own, or he must have had some idea of a *general Christian*, without any distinctive rites or theological opinions, like the *general man* of Plato, and those who, after him, believed in the independent existence of general ideas apart from their individual attributes — which is a very ingenious metaphysical notion (though even as that, it is now pretty much exploded,) but not to be carried out, or conceived of as able to be carried out, in real practical life. It is possible that one of these alternatives may have been in Stephen Girard's mind; it is more probable that, not being really a Christian, though he nominally belonged to the Romish Church, he did not see the use

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\* See the same clause of the will.



of Christianity, while, as a keen practical man, he had a sharp eye for the abuses of sectarian polemics. Industry, temperance, veracity, all the *business* virtues, he adored, but had not sufficiently enlightened views to perceive the intimate dependence of "the purest principles of morality" on the Christian religion. Hence his scheme of turning all clergymen bodily out of the college, because different sects have a tendency to wrangle, which seems to me about on a par with the conduct of a man who should found an asylum, and because there are Allopaths, and Homœopaths, and Hydropaths, and various other paths and ways of killing and curing, the followers of which are accustomed to abuse one another respectively, should prohibit every M. D. whatsoever from entering the premises of the said asylum.

One effect of this restriction, I think, must be obvious to any one who considers the matter seriously. It has a perilous tendency to give the scholars a prejudice against all clergymen. These orphans are fed, clothed, and taught gratuitously, they naturally are grateful to their benefactor, and learn to respect his memory and value his opinions. They find out that no ministers of the Gospel are allowed to enter the college. If they inquire into the reason of this prohibition, it will reach their minds in some such form as this — that it was because ministers of different sects are apt to quarrel. I do not see how the *prestige* can be otherwise than unfavorable. As Mr. G. intended that the children should be left to "adopt such religious tenets as their maturer reason might enable them to prefer," he probably was afraid of their acquiring a prejudice in favor of some denomination while at college, which would be most effectively prevented by giving them an impartial prejudice *against* the ministers of *all* denominations.

One word more before taking leave of Stephen Girard. The desire of immortality embraces this world as well as the next. Man longs to perpetuate his name upon earth. Most of us οὐ πολλοὶ seek to do it in the way alluded to by Plato. Great spirits do it by splendid achievements of genius. Girard was not in a position to continue his name and memory by either of these methods. He had no family; he was not a distinguished man in politics, science, or literature. All his greatness



consisted in his fortune. This, and his name in connection with it, he could preserve only by leaving it for some public object; and the disposition which he did make of it, for the instruction of men's minds to the neglect of their souls, was not exactly the best conceivable, nor the most likely to "open a fountain of blessedness to the end of time."

John Jacob Astor, like Stephen Girard, was a foreigner, who settled in this country and made a large fortune by mercantile pursuits. Unlike him, he had a family; unlike him, too, he aspired to be something more than a mere man of business. Though not a liberally educated man, he enjoyed the society of literary men; though possessing no extraordinary means of political information or training, he saw further into the interests, capacities, and destiny of the country of his adoption, than those who were at the head of the government. He had visions of founding a great colony, and these visions were only prevented becoming realities by the shortsightedness of our rulers. It would be superfluous for me to dilate upon the circumstances of his Pacific expedition and settlement: they have already been celebrated by the one man in America most capable of doing them justice. Mr. Astor asked of the government but one sloop of war and a lieutenant's commission for himself; with these he promised to defend the territory since so famous as the Oregon, and he could have done it, for the aborigines there were then our friends. Our government did not see the importance of the region, and suffered it to be captured by the British, and afterwards, under the treaty of joint occupation, to fall virtually into the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company, who acquired the confidence of and control over the natives. The consequences of this oversight were, first, that during a period of nearly thirty years enormous profits, which would otherwise have accrued to American citizens, flowed into the pockets of British subjects; and, secondly, that at the end of that time the question of disputed territory tore open old wounds, revived the worst animosities which had been rapidly dying away, and nearly involved the two countries in a terrible war. The clear head which would have prevented these losses and mischiefs distinctly foresaw them. After the treaty of Ghent was concluded,



Mr. Astor said to his friend, Albert Gallatin, "I am very much pleased with all that you gentlemen, [the Commissioners,] have *done*, but there are some things which you ought not to have left *undone*. You should have settled more definitely the question of the Columbia territory." Mr. Gallatin was a most able and longheaded man, but even he did not appreciate the correctness of his friend's views, and attributed to personal feelings the importance which Mr. A. attached to the subject. He answered with a smile, "Never mind, Mr. Astor, it will be time enough for our great-grandchildren to talk about that in two hundred years." "If we live," replied the other, "we shall see trouble about it in less than forty years." He lived to see his prediction verified within the given time. And this is the man whom you represent as a mere skin-flint, who had no idea beyond his money-bags.

When Mr. Astor found that his efforts for the public benefit were not understood, he did what it would be well if more people did now-a-days — he confined himself to his own business, and by it amassed a fortune, stated by his executors to be a little less, but generally presumed to be a little more than eight millions of dollars. Of this he bequeathed the great bulk to his eldest son, a respectable competence to his daughter and grandchildren, fifty thousand dollars to the poor of his native village in Germany, and four hundred thousand for the establishment of a public library in this city.

It is not generally considered that Mr. Astor's will was in all respects an equitable one, and I certainly should be the last to maintain that it was. But, be this as it may, it has nothing to do with the question between us, for you do not blame John Jacob Astor because he left too little to some of his relatives, but because he left anything to any of them.

To return, then, to the Astor Library. It is very easy to sneer at a bequest of "only half a million, or less than half a million of dollars;" words cost nothing, and any man can afford to be liberal of another's property. But I maintain that the endowment is not a despicable one, whether considered positively in itself or comparatively with reference to Mr. Astor's fortune. It is not an every-day occurrence for a man to leave even one-sixteenth of his property to the public, and the sum



left is sufficient to establish a library much superior to any now existing in the country. And I assert, that the disposition of this money was a particularly good and wise one, and that the institution is eminently calculated to be a benefit and an honor to this city. It is less grand and imposing than the Girard College; there is less of it; but it is also less open to objection, and in some points more calculated to command respect. How, for instance, would the two institutions strike an intelligent foreigner? An Englishman comes here, or is sent here by authority, to observe the state of education and knowledge among us. According to the natural order of things he is a clergyman, education in England being placed almost entirely in the hands of that class. In the one case, he finds a library open to all decent people and well provided with valuable works of all sorts; he is politely received by the accomplished and learned superintendent, and, after seeing all that is to be seen, is informed that the trustees will be much obliged to him if he can, from his special professional knowledge or otherwise, suggest any books which the library ought to, but does not possess. In the other, he has a very fine view of the *outside* of a grand edifice, which he is not permitted to enter for fear of causing disputes and controversy!\*

It is not, however, my present intention to elaborate a panegyric upon my grandfather, nor was the vindication of his memory from your attack my only or principal motive for addressing you this letter. That attack was but an individual instance of misrepresentation; there are general opinions broadly announced in your lecture which provoke animadversion — opinions which are often

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\* There is a story on record of a "professional" (I am not sure but it was Mr. Thomas Hyer himself, the champion of the American turf) going to Philadelphia on a spree. According to the custom of such persons in America when out on a holiday, he was got up in a very precise suit of black. To be sure he had not a white cravat but there are many "denominations" who do not regard this as essential. Among other lionizings he went to take a peep at the Girard College and was refused admittance, on which he expressed his surprise and indignation in very strong language — such language that, if reported for drawing-room reading it would require to be written down with a great many blanks and dashes. "Oh I beg your pardon sir" exclaimed the janitor as soon as he heard the emphatic expletives, *pray walk in*. I really mistook you for a clergyman.



promulgated in disreputable quarters, but which I never before detected coming from a respectable source.

On your 61st page I find these words: "Vast fortunes are a misfortune to the state. They confer irresponsible power; and human nature, except in the rarest instances, has proved incapable of wielding irresponsible power without abuse. The feudalism of capital is not a whit less formidable than the feudalism of force. The millionaire is as dangerous to the welfare of the community in our day, as was the baronial lord of the Middle Ages."

Such language coming from a man in your position should be characterized as it deserves, without any euphemism or affectation of delicacy. It is perilous nonsense: it is a groundless and wicked absurdity. *How* is the millionaire dangerous to the community? What special privileges has he? What exemption from the law? What attribute of feudalism or aristocracy? In what possible sense is he *irresponsible*? What power does his money give him to infringe on the rights of others, or to force their consciences? What can he do to divert the course of justice, or to modify the expression of the popular voice? Is there a millionaire in New-York or Boston who could change the vote of his own coachman? To talk of the *political* influence of a rich man in this country, is like talking of a Highlander's trousers, or an antirenter's honesty, or Northern aggressions on the South, or anything which is notoriously nothing at all. It is a subject proper only for metaphysical treatises like Plato's *Sophist*, which discuss *the existence of non-existences*. Or is the rich man able to pervert justice and wrap the integrity of our tribunals? Desire of popularity, and fear of opposing the tide of public opinion, have, it must be owned with shame, sometimes exercised an undue influence on judges and jurors and counsel, but I think it would not be possible to produce, from the annals of our jurisprudence, a single case in which a suitor has obtained more than his due, or a criminal escaped the punishment due him, by the mere power of his wealth. Having had some opportunities of observing what power and influence wealth really does confer among us, I have found it to amount usually to this, that if a man is rich and known to be liberal in the way of entertaining, he



will find some half-dozen people to toady him for the sake of his dinners.

In fact, so far from a rich man's having any unfair advantage in the community, he labors under many positive disadvantages; so far from his being to treat others unfairly, he is continually liable to be unfairly treated himself. The popular prejudice is always against him, whether he is a party in a law-suit, or a mover in any public matter, or whether he merely expresses an opinion. Let *me* relate an anecdote which I do not merely "believe," but *know* to be authentic. Two American gentlemen meet abroad, one a youth just emerging into manhood, with some literary taste and intellectual promise, the other a middle-aged man of the world, with much political and social experience. Says the junior, in the course of a long talk about things at home, "When I return, I mean to write a series of pamphlets on such and such subjects," (naming certain leading questions of the day.) "You had better save yourself the trouble," replies his older and more experienced friend, "for the very fact of your being a rich man will destroy any weight that your suggestions might otherwise have." Indeed, not only the actual possession, but the bare reputation or suspicion of wealth, will often annihilate a man's public influence, and make him distrusted. A person with wealthy connections and refined habits will readily incur the penalty of being denounced as a *millionaire* and an *aristocrat* — convertible terms of opprobrium with many scribblers here.\*

If we look for the cause of this treatment, we shall not be very far wrong in attributing it to the *spirit of envy*, which modern democracy produces and fosters. There has been a great deal said about the peculiar dangers of democracy, and the various abuses to which our po-

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\* I do not mean to say that there is no aristocracy in the country — that is to say, no set or sets of men who use their own, so as to abuse their neighbors, who infringe upon other people's rights, and exercise a tyranny over other people's amusements and occupations. There is a sufficiency of *such* aristocracy among us; so far as my observation has extended, it is composed chiefly of the following classes: 1st, Omnibus drivers — 2d, Hotelkeepers — 3d, Newspaper editors — 4th, Blackguards and rowdies generally, such as the people who stormed the Opera House, and drove Macready out of New-York.



litical and social forms are prone; but it really does seem to me, that this, which has never to my knowledge been specially dwelt upon by any writer on the subject, is the very worst evil chargeable on democracy. As soon as a man does anything, or has anything done to him, to put him above others in any way, he violates the first article of the democratic creed, "Every man's as good as another."\* Instead of a legitimate source of pride, as he would be in most countries, he becomes an object of suspicion and hatred. We see the greatest and worst development of this feeling in the universally admitted fact, that to be a great statesman, and generally acknowledged as such, is precisely the way *not* to become President of the United States, and the little germs of it are traceable in the petty local dislikes felt for, and annoyances aimed at, any man who happens to have a finer house, larger library, or better appointed equipage, than his neighbors. True, as the spirit of admiration for superiority is natural to man, and not to be altogether eradicated by any adverse influences, there are some kinds of excellence which still command honor among us. In the South and South-West, military glory is at a premium, and the successful general meets with a full appreciation of his merits. In the North and East, literature, up to a certain point, is very popular; indeed, it finds great sympathy as a very excellent democratic pursuit, almost every third man or woman being, in some sense or non-sense of the term, an author. And a literary man stands more chance of being spoiled by flattery, than soured by detraction — unless he should dare to oppose the current of any popular opinion; in that case, all his talent cannot save him. With these exceptions, it may be safely affirmed, that as soon as a man becomes conspicuous for anything, so soon is he slandered and hated; and of no class of persons is this truer than those whom you stigmatize as "equally dangerous to the community with the baronial lords of the Middle Ages."

Take an obvious example. Our newspapers, which are generally conducted by average specimens of the

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\* It is hardly necessary to observe, that I do not use the words *democracy* and *democrats* in their technical party sense. I am quite aware that you are called a whig, and sometimes vote with the whigs in Congress.



people at large, which, collectively, exercise an immense influence on public opinion, and in return, pretend with tolerable truth to be a reflex of that opinion, have with a few honorable exceptions, a special *penchant* for abusing rich men, and inventing or circulating things to their prejudice. If a rich man is in business, of course he is making his money by dishonest practices. If not in business, he must necessarily be idle, and therefore vicious, it being a matter of course that a man cannot be occupied, unless he is visible so many hours a day in a store or office, and equally so, that he must be a votary of dissipation unless he goes through a certain routine of work every morning. If he gives money for any public object, he is not praised for his liberality, but abused for not giving more. If he spends his wealth in fostering art or literature, he ought to have built hospitals or free-schools with it. If he is in any trouble or affliction, a great shout of joy is set up, and the affair is placarded as much as possible. Now, these gentlemen of the press know pretty well their own pecuniary interests, whatever may be their ignorance on other important points; and with all their horror of rich men, have a knack of filling their own pockets comfortably; and they would not be so ready to abuse the wealthy, unless it paid to do it.

And now, sir, you, by incorrect and mischievous assertions, made deliberately, and in a most public manner, are doing your best to aid and abet, and increase this prejudice and tyranny of an unjust public opinion.

What can have been your motive or reason, or excuse, for so doing? It is just possible that having, among other hobbies, ridden that of abolition pretty hard, and having become thoroughly imbued with a detestation of the injustice involved in the idea of a slaveholding millionaire, you have come, by that confusion of similar ideas, which is the commonest of American fallacies, to associate *wealth* with *oppression*, so that you deem the factory operative the slave of the factory owner, the servant of the master, and generally the employed of the employer. To this suspicion, a color is lent by the sentence on your next page, "The power of money is as imperial as the power of the sword, and I may as well depend upon another man for my head as for my bread." Now, I will not stop to expose the inapplicability of such



a supposition to our country, — that has been done already often enough. I will only say, *if you really believe this*, then you are the most inconsistent of men in keeping up an agitation in and out of Congress, against Southern slavery — you are a most gratuitous and unwarrantable meddler in pouring out the vials of your wrath on the inhabitants of one part of the country, for practising exactly what exists, by your own statement, under a different form in your own part of the country. And the representatives from Carolina and Georgia, who tell you to go home and mind your own business, for your laboring classes are as badly off as their slaves, will be perfectly in the right. I had always supposed, that when the fierce strife of words arose in our national halls of legislation between Northerner and Southerner, that it was because the white laborer here was *not* to be compared to the black slave there, — because it was a foul wrong and a vile slander, to make the comparison, — because the good people of Ohio had sent “Tom Corwin the waggoner’s boy” to the Federal Senate, and the wood-sawyer’s son sat next to the ex-President’s in the schools of Boston, — that the Representatives of Northern labor — Horace Mann among them — were so eager to repel the taunt and invective of the slaveholder, and to roll back upon him his arrogant assertion. To be sure, I have not read Congressional speeches very attentively, nor am I curious in discovering how far the meridian under which a man is speaking influences his assertions and arguments. But no! it cannot be. A man like you must know better than this. I am forced to conclude that you were tempted by the euphonious jingle of “bread” and “head,” and the desire, like Mr. Pecksniff, of turning an elegant period, without being particularly solicitous that it should mean anything.

Even at the South, it would not be correct to say wealth exercises a dangerous or injurious influence. The evil is, not that one man holds three slaves, and another three thousand, but that any man holds slaves at all. There is a ruling class and a subject class; the one race oppresses the other; but there is no social or political oppression exercised by particular members of the ruling class over the rest of their body. Among the whites there is as much, or nearly as much equality as at the



North. The Virginians, for instance, are known to be all on a level, every man we meet from the state belonging to "one of the first families" in it. But this, by the way.

I was trying to find your reason for a very unreasonable proposition which you had laid down. The first attempt being unsuccessful, we must try again. A few lines lower, on the same page, (the 62d,) I find this sentence:

"Weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, or even in the clumsy scales of human justice, there is no equity in the allotments which assign to one man but a dollar a day with working, while another has an income of a dollar a minute without working."

The clumsy scales of human justice have always allowed one man to be richer than another. The balance of the sanctuary allows one man to be stronger, handsomer, healthier, wiser, than another. Is inequality in all things injustice? Very possibly you hope to annihilate all these inequalities, by observance of the physical laws, and to make men all equal in health, strength, beauty and intelligence, as well as in property. If your allusion to the Divine government of the world is intended to mean anything, you must have some such vision. As to the human part of the proposition, if, I say again, your assertion means anything, it is mere absolute Socialism. This man lives in a fine house without having to work. I have to work, and am poor. This is unjust to me. I have as good a right to the money as he has, and if ever I grow strong enough, am justified in seizing it. *La propriété c'est le vol.*

It is an old story to expose such fallacies, but when they are repeated and endorsed by a man of your position and character, it seems necessary to take some notice of them, even at the risk of saying over again what has been better said a thousand times before. What is work? Is there no work but carrying a hoe or wielding a spade? Is all work equally valuable; or is the value of work to the community to be measured by the physical labor expended, or the time occupied in it? Supposing one man, by his mechanical ingenuity and study and enterprise, produces an invention which adds millions every year to the wealth of his country; is it unjust that



he should get some droppings of the golden shower, and enjoy a large fortune for the rest of his life? Is it not bare justice and honesty on the part of the nation, acting as between man and man, to allow him this advantage? Nay, more; as he may, in many instances, not have achieved his task till arrived at a time of life when it is too late for him to get the full enjoyment of his worldly wealth, is it unjust that he should be allowed to bequeath it to his nearest and dearest relatives? Such a state of things is a direct analogy with the moral government of the world, under which, as you yourself have taken pains to show, (p. 19,) the bodily and mental defects and excellencies of the parents are very frequently inherited by the children. Suppose a man has written a book that will last as long as the language in which it is written, and give pleasure and profit to millions of readers for successive ages. If he happens to get more than a usual share of the good things of the world, ought we to cry out against this as an injustice? Ought we not rather to pray that it might happen oftener? Suppose he practises a literary leisure in the intervals of composition, and cannot positively be said to do anything for some months in the year, — is he entitled to no more indulgence than the hod-carrier at a dollar a day, whose influence upon society is confined to the number of houses he helps to build, unless he chances to break his neighbor's head, and figure in the police reports of the day? The "injustice" will hardly hold good then, I think, any more than the "Feudality." But perhaps rich people are dangerous to the community, from the mischief they do in a negative way, by their idleness. You are terribly severe upon idleness as "the most absurd of absurdities, and the most shameful of shames." But here, again, it is necessary to examine into the signification of our words. By *idleness*, you evidently mean independence — the absence of a fixed, imperative daily occupation, and the freedom to choose and vary one's occupation from day to day. This is clear by your illustration of "wealth that breeds idleness," the English peerage. This example struck me the more, because at the very time of reading your pamphlet, I happened to be in daily communication with a member of that peerage, a very young man, heir apparent to one of the most distinguished titles in his



country, and a harder working man of his age, or one in a more complete state of training, physical and mental, I have never met with. He is not obliged to labor for his bread at any fixed occupation, and therefore you would call him a "bivalve" and other hard names, but he does the work of two men every day of his life, and his services to the community of which he is a member, are worth those of a great many day-laborers or clerks put together. I have known or met a number of young men of the same class, not all equally learned or intelligent, but all of them decidedly *men*, who had, by study or exercise, made the most of what natural gifts they possessed, and were very respectably qualified to take part in the government of their country; and would be the first to turn out and fight for it, if it were threatened from abroad.

With regard to the "specimens which are beginning to abound here," I fear it must be conceded that their time is not always so diligently or profitably employed. But they have the excuse that, owing to the popular prejudice already alluded to, the most natural as well as most honorable path of duty is virtually closed against them.

But let us go a little farther into first principles. I positively deny that the absence of occupation is necessarily in itself a disgraceful absurdity, and I still more positively deny that work is necessarily in itself honorable and profitable. A great deal of idleness is from its very nature innocuous. A great deal of occupation is directly mischievous. One of two brothers lives quietly and lazily in the house of his fathers; the other works all day to pull it down, having no means to provide a new one. He is occupied intensely — but would it not better for himself and the family, that he should emulate his brother's idleness? A demagogue — lecturer, member of Congress, or otherwise — exerts himself to foster social or sectional prejudices, to set one class, or one interest, or one division of a country, against another; he is very busily employed; but is he not more mischievous in his influence on society than the club-room lounge, who plays billiards half the morning? There are many hard-working people whom it would be a mercy to mankind to keep quiet, and not a few idle people whom I, for



one, should be very sorry to see attempting any business. Add to this, that a great deal of what popularly passes for idleness is in its results very effective performance,\* and you have somewhat of a case made out for the man of no fixed daily occupation.

The purport of the preceding paragraphs (somewhat desultory, I confess, but not altogether undesignedly so, from a desire to view the subject in several lights,) is that the capitalists of this country are, neither as a class nor as individuals, possessed of any unjust power in the state, or in any way dangerous to the community — which indeed one would think must be a truism to any man of ordinary intelligence, information and honesty.

Discussing the *powers* of a class naturally brings us to the discussion of their *responsibilities*, since responsibility is directly proportioned to power. And since in this case you exaggerate the power, it is to be expected that you should exaggerate the responsibility also. Since you compare the power of wealthy republicans to that of feudal barons, we may well suppose that you will expect them to exert as much influence on the state of society. But your notion of responsibility is the queerest ever heard of, for it consists in holding the man responsible for precisely that which he does *not* do and cannot prevent.\*\* Because some shameless woman lives by prostitution, it is wrong for Mr. A. to go to the Opera. Because some vagabond gets drunk and beats his wife, Mr. B. "incurs enormous guilt" in buying a Turner or sitting to Gray for his portrait. Because some Irishman, under the baneful direction of his priest, will not let his children go to school, Mr. C. is a monster of iniquity for "walling himself in" with a large library. We are just about as much responsible for these things as you are for the existence of slavery in the state of Georgia, and by the sacrifice of all "our superfluous wealth and time" could do about as much to prevent them as you could to put down slavery by devoting all your spare Congressional

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\* "Imagine an active bustling little prætor under Augustus, how he probably pointed out Horace to his sons, as a moony kind of man, whose ways were much to be avoided, and told them it was a weakness in Augustus to like such idle men about him, instead of men of business." — *Helps' Friends in Council*.

\*\* Pp. 60 and 82.



pay to buying up the slaves of Mr. Toombs, or by going yourself into the great but barbarous nation of South Carolina, and getting yourself torn to pieces by the savage inhabitants.

Certainly there is one case in which men of fortune and leisure in a large city are responsible for the vice and misery in it — when, by their bad example, they tend to increase both. If they frequent gambling hells and other haunts of dissipation, if they patronize the black-leg and the bawd, if they waste in dishonor what their fathers honorably acquired — then they, *in common with the members of other classes who participate in these practices*, lie under the awful responsibility of having produced misery by encouraging vice. But unless it can be shown that such melancholy examples are more common in the wealthiest class than in any other, it is unfair and absurd to throw upon it the whole responsibility. And I make bold to say, that whether in point of obedience to the laws of the land or to the requisitions of morality, this much abused class will compare favorably with the rest of society. Those members of it who are still making money, are too much engrossed with their business to do mischief to any one; and if the younger portion has some follies, such as dancing ten hours a day in New-York, or training fast horses in Philadelphia, or making bad copies of good pictures in Boston, these frivolities are injurious only to themselves, and very far from exercising a feudal tyranny over the rest of the community. It would be as reasonable to say that the butterfly was a dangerous member of the animal kingdom, or to hold it responsible for the misdeeds of the lion and the hyena.

I wonder it never occurred to you, that by exaggerating the power of money, you were furnishing a fearful stimulus to the pursuit of wealth for improper motives. True, you may say, "I have furnished the antidote along with the bane;" but the bane affects the very persons who will not be affected by the antidote. You inflame a young man's imagination, by suggesting to him the acquisition of an extra-legal, irresponsible power, giving as a reason for his not wishing to seek wealth, the very thing that will make him desire it; nor does the Hibernian after-thought of exaggerating the responsibility of the irresponsible power mend the matter at all. It is like



the play of Jack Sheppard, where the final execution of the robber-hero does not present a moral sufficient to counterbalance the previous fascinating exhibition of his free and easy life.

But there is one power which the rich man has, not only not dangerous, but in the highest degree beneficial to the community. It is the power of encouraging Art and Literature. And since the taste which energizes this power is more usually developed in the second generation than in the first, it is rather to be desired than deprecated, that we had more men *educated to spend money*. I wish most heartily that there were more men among us able to incur the enormous guilt of having large libraries, and beautiful picture galleries. For as to saying that these things should be the work of the State, which is the dream of some people, it would be as reasonable to suppose, that virtuous laws and institutions could prevail in a nation individually profligate, as that a people can encourage art and literature, if the individuals composing it are semi-literate, (if I may be allowed to coin a word for the occasion,) and unsæsthetic.

Here, however, we come to a direct issue. So far from thinking the encouragement of literature and the arts desirable for and glorious to a nation, you view them as comparatively useless, if not altogether pernicious.

This is, after all, our great cause of quarrel. Had it not been for these disparaging remarks of yours, I should probably have remained silent. But, a delighted worshipper of art, and, it would be absurd to say a literary man, but I may say, a constant and devoted student of literature — one who believes these to be two mighty influences toward, and tests of, civilization, is disposed to resent most promptly, from motives of duty as well as feeling, all assaults made upon them by either the Puritan or the Utilitarian. Your remarks, certainly more honest and undisguised than any I have met with in writers of the same school, go very far to confirm the opinion authorised by many able men, that the present spirit of radicalism, and self-styled "progress," is progress the wrong way, destructive of civilization and cultivation, and altogether barbarizing in its tendency.

On the subject of the Fine Arts, I shall not say much. A certain amount of sympathy with them, and



appreciation of them, (which may exist without any practical ability of performance in them,) seems necessary to any person before he can be put on common ground with their advocates. They are like the Spanish mariner in the ballad —

“Yo no digo esta cancion sino a quien conmigo va.”

“Wouldst thou learn my galley’s secret?  
With my galley thou must go.”

A man may be ignorant of music in a scientific point of view; he may be unable to explain critically its beneficial influence on himself and others; but if he cannot feel, and does not acknowledge any such influence, it seems to me there must be something radically wrong about him. A poet who is usually allowed to be a great master of human nature, though he did live before the spiritual laws were discovered by the craniologists, has said —

“The man who hath no music in himself,

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*Let no such man be trusted.”*

I very much fear that Horace Mann has no music in himself, and is not to be trusted for an opinion on the virtue and value of music. About painting you have said more. Here you lay great stress on an antagonism which has no existence. You extol the beauties of nature, and commend them to our contemplation, instead of those of art.\* Now, not only is there no natural antipathy or incompatibility between the two pursuits, but they naturally go together, and reciprocally encourage and help each other. Who is a more ardent admirer and diligent student of nature than the landscape-painter? He could not be a landscape-painter if he were not. This eye for nature is the first requisite in his art. And what makes one more anxious to see a striking or beautiful place, than the sight of a truthful and competent representation of it? People who have learned to appreciate the beauties of art, have acquired, *pari passu*, a deep appreciation of natural beauty. People who

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\* Pp. 49, 50.



systematically despise and ignore art, are ready to practise any barbarity upon nature. I have seen men who, standing before Raphael's Transfiguration, audibly wished they had half the money it cost; and I have seen the same men reading newspapers, when they had only to lift their eyes to behold the most gorgeous autumnal sunset. The utilitarian who sneers at the expenditure of five thousand dollars for a picture, would be the first man to build a rag mill over a cascade, or drain a lake for an acre of pasture ground. A Mr. Jervis, engineer of a railroad company, recommended a route which defaces the whole east bank of the Hudson, as far as the road extends, and one of his avowed reasons was, that the appearance of the shore would be improved by cutting away its sharp curves, and filling up its bays! There is a fair specimen of the veneration for nature, that you may expect from an unartistic and unæsthetic man.

But your observations on literature merit a more careful examination and discussion, for the extraordinary fallacies which they involve, and that too on a subject which one cannot suppose you ignorant of, or incompetent to appreciate. The first Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education must be, I should think, to some extent, a literary man. Yet we find you undervaluing literature, because it is not something different from itself, because it is not intimately connected with something, with which it cannot possibly be intimately connected. You begin with a very *ad captandum* antithesis. „Literature is mainly conversant with the works of man, while science deals with the works of God; and the difference in the subject matter of the two, indicates the difference in their relative value, and in the power and happiness they can respectively bestow” — (p. 51.) The statement is very effective, but it is obtained only by leaving out a considerable portion of the truth on both sides. In the first place, literature is conversant, not only with the *works* of man, but with the *mind* of man, the greatest of all God's works in this world. Here the literary men had the start of the metaphysicians by hundreds and thousands of years. But, further, when the poet celebrates in song the beauties of nature, is he not dealing with the works of God? When the scientific man writes or lectures about pumps, and pulleys, and screws, and



levers; and all sorts of mechanism, is he not conversant with the works of man? No doubt, he does frequently deal with the works of God. Mr. Jervis was dealing with the works of God, when he defaced the most beautiful river in the world; and very foul dealing it is sometimes, and a great bore to the said works, and not all calculated to improve the mind. Suppose I were to begin an argument with such a sentence as this, "Literature is conversant with mind, while science deals with matter, and the difference in the subject of the two indicates the difference in their respective value." You would cry out against the unfairness of the assumption, but it would be just as fair as yours, which asserts of the whole field of literature what is true only of one subordinate department of it — criticism.

"A vast proportion of our literature consists of what had been written, or is a reproduction of what had been written before the truths of modern science were discovered."

And what if it was? So far as this has any bearing on its value, it would be as much to the purpose to say, that it had been written before M. Soyer invented the *omelette à la Beelzebub*, or Horace Greeley set up the New-York Tribune. Do men go to the historian, the dramatist, or the poet, to learn natural science, or technical metaphysics? Does it enter into their vocation to teach such things? Did any man who knew the meaning of words ever ask it of them? And if not, how are they, in their literary capacity, concerned by the progress of science? To insist on condemning literature, because it has been developed faster than science, is a most extraordinary instance of inability to discriminate between two things essentially different. For not only does literature not depend upon science for any of its essentials, but any attempt to transfer the language of the one to the other, is, *ipso facto*, an inconvenience, an absurdity, or a burlesque. In mathematical science, for instance, the excellence of a proposition is, that it be expressed in the fewest words, consistent with intelligibility; indeed, symbols are used as much as possible to the exclusion of words. Any ornament is not merely superfluous, but injurious. The science of law, though not exactly similar in respect of brevity, is equally sedulous to avoid



the ornaments and graces of language. And, generally, the unpoetical suggestions and tendencies of science are all but proverbial. When, therefore, you say, that "All science may be invested with the charms of literature," (p. 52,) and that "there is no reason why literature should not hereafter be founded on science," (p. 54,) your conceit is not merely impossible, but farcical. Every word in it is a joke, to which the *Loves of the Triangles*, and Punch's *Lays of the Acids and Alkalies*, are sober seriousness.

That the progress of natural science should have influence on *Theology*, was natural enough; and at one or two epochs there has seemed danger of their interfering. Happily the danger was only seeming. The wisest men have agreed that Genesis and Geology are reconcilable, and that Joshua's commanding the sun to stand still does not altogether disprove the authenticity of the Old Testament. It is generally admitted that the Scriptures were not written to teach men natural science.

Yet there was at least a speciousness in the claim that our religious standard should conform to the progress of modern scientific discovery; but to insist on such a conformity in our literary standards, or to condemn them for not possessing it, has no such excuse; because, first, the things are totally different in themselves, and secondly, the facts of the case abundantly refute you, it being, for instance, well known that while the ancient Greeks were very badly off for physical science, their literary works take rank with any since produced. If I were to urge against the value of some recent discovery in Medicine, Astronomy, or Mechanics, that it was made in an age which could boast of few great literary men, you would laugh at the irrelevancy of my objection; yet this would be the very counterpart of your charge against the "vast proportion of our literature," that it was written before the truths of modern science were discovered.

Again I find, about a page farther on, that the same "vast proportion of the existing literature has as little relation to metaphysical truth as the speculations of the schoolmen before the time of Bacon had to physical laws. It is not more true that Aristotle and his followers invented laws for nature which she never owned, and explained her phenomena on principles that never existed,



than it is that most of those works which we call works of the imagination assume the existence of spiritual laws, such as the spirit of man never knew, and therefore produce results of action and character, such as all experience repudiates. Hence it is, that I would commend science more than literature, as an improver of the mind."

Hence it is. *Voilà pourquoi votre fille est muette.* The milk in the cocoa-nut is now satisfactorily accounted for. But let us examine the premises of this luminous inference with a little care. "Metaphysical truth." Does this refer to mere technical and formal metaphysics, or to those practical metaphysics which constitute what is called a knowledge of character and human nature, and enable the writer to portray human nature accurately. If to the latter, is is positively incorrect and contrary to the facts of the case. Have the great poets, dramatists and novelists, from Homer and Sophocles to Shakespeare and Scott, displayed an ignorance of human nature, and misrepresented it? Are there any evidences that the writers of the present or coming generation will surpass them in this respect? If it refers to the former, it is altogether irrelevant, and but a repetition of your former fallacy of confusion. But even if it were not, are you certain that all existing *science* has a correct relation to metaphysical truth. Do mathematics and metaphysics, for example, always walk hand in hand? I have seen mathematical text-books of reputation, in which fundamental mechanical propositions, such as the Parallelogram of Forces, were proved by arguing in a circle. When it comes to the Doctrine of Chances, which involves metaphysical as well as mathematical elements, your mere mathematicians make the wildest work, as any one who has the good fortune to be a good mathematician and metaphysician both will tell you. And in one of the best known metaphysical works of the day, Mills' *System of Logic*, some of the most prominent examples of fallacies are taken from *received principles among physical philosophers*, such as the Principle of the Sufficient Reason.

But now comes the overwhelming paradox and anticlimax of all.

"Gall, Spurzheim and Combe have done for metaphysics, or the science of mind, as great a work as Bacon did for physics, or the laws of matter."



This sentence, I must own, not only staggered, but absolutely upset me, and it took me some time to recover from it. Well, thought I, many hard things have been said against the sciences, but it was left for Mr. Mann to give them the unkindest out of all, and that under the treacherous disguise of friendship. He has thrown down literature and the arts under their feet for them to trample on, and it is only to degrade them the more by setting up over their heads in the first seat the very equivocal science of Craniology, or, as it boastfully styles itself, Phrenology. Verily, if the great scientific lights of the world, the great chemists, natural historians and astronomers of Europe, were to hear this, methinks they would cry out most lustily to be delivered from such friends. They would agree that it was a decided case of *non tali auxilio*.

One good, however, such as it was, accrued to me from perusing this wonderful sentence. It threw a little light, dim to be sure, but still a little, on a portion of your 51st page, which at first, not pretending to understand the language in which it was written, I had passed over as a mere blank, the words conveying no definite idea to me.

"By far the larger part of all histories, a great portion of epic poetry, and almost all martial poetry, are addressed to the brutish propensities of combativeness and destructiveness. But physical science addresses itself to the noble faculty of causality, and the kindred members of its group, including the mathematical powers; and ethical science addresses itself both to causality and to conscientiousness, and seeks also the sacred sanction of veneration for whatever it teaches."

This, it now appears, is the comparison of literature and science according to the craniological standard; and it reminds me of a craniologist I once heard lecture, who argued that Newton and Pitt and Brougham were not by any means great men, because they were deficient in certain "organs." Still, however, it is not perfectly satisfactory, and leaves room for question and comment. For instance, are "combativeness and destructiveness" necessarily and invariably pernicious attributes, and if so, why is your model young man, some twenty pages farther on, to "combat hand to hand with some of those terrific monsters that infest society"? Or is the larger part of all history to be disregarded and thrown aside



by the young man desirous of improving his mind, on account of its appealing to these brutish propensities? Or is the new *régime* to eliminate all the combative and destructive part out of history? I do not pretend to answer. *Davus sum non Œdipus*. If the votaries cannot explain themselves, we, the outsiders, are not called on to interpret them. But it seems probable that the last supposition may be the correct one, from what follows, where you say that "ethical philosophy and education, as well as several other things, can never be properly understood but in the light of their (Spurzheim and Gall's) philosophy." Now, as this philosophy was only invented in the year 1809, it follows that before that time there was no proper understanding of education or ethical science, a supposition very flattering to the vanity of the disciples of progress, but not exactly confirmed by the record of history or the experience of the student's researches.

Once more,

"As the science of zoology has hunted krakens, phoenixes, unicorns and vampires [?] from the animal kingdom; as the science of astronomy has swept pestilential and war-portending comets, and all the terrors and the follies of astrology, from the sky; as a knowledge of chemistry has made the notion of charms and philters and universal remedies, and the philosopher's stone, ridiculous and contemptible; as an improved knowledge of the operations of nature around us has banished fairies, and gnomes, and ghosts and witches, and a belief in dreams and signs, from all respectable society; [how comes it then that so many craniologists believe in the Rochester knockings?] so will an analytical knowledge of the faculties of the human mind, of their special functions and ends, and of their related objects in the world of matter and in the world of spirit, sweep into forgetfulness four-fifths of what is called literature." (Pp. 53-4.)

Now that four-fifths, and even a greater proportion of the books composing the current literature of the day, are destined to oblivion, there can be no doubt. But this is not true of works on literature alone, it is equally so of works on the sciences. They have the same elements of decay, their multiplication beyond the power of perusal, and the varying nature of their subject-matter — the latter indeed to a greater extent than any merely



literary productions. The discoveries continually made in the physical sciences must render a number of the books on them obsolete; so must the discoveries and fashions (for there is a great deal of fashion among mathematicians, though they are not generally suspected of it,) in pure mathematics. No schools of literature have succeeded and dethroned one another so fast as the schools of modern metaphysics. Astronomers tell us that some fixed stars may never be visible on this earth until after they have ceased to exist; and in like manner, a German writer on mental philosophy is frequently exploded and his theory upset by his countrymen, just as England, France, and America are beginning to take an interest in him. Nor do the writings of the craniologists in any way influence or accelerate the destruction of our present literature, except by their own numerical addition to the perishing portion of it. As to your suggestion of cranio-logizing all future literature, it is the essence of farce. One hardly knows how to attempt treating such a proposition seriously. To be sure, there are "reforms" equally absurd to keep it in countenance. Not very long ago I chanced to see the writings of some people who called themselves (if I recollect rightly) *Phonetics*, modestly claimed to have invented a perfect alphabet, and seriously proposed to alter the spelling of the whole language, and oblige every existing book to be rewritten and reprinted.

Here, then, we arrive at the great conclusions of your advice to young men, which I have found it convenient to consider in a nearly inverse order — a dogma, that craniology is at the head of all desirable human knowledge — another dogma, that rich men are dangerous to the community, — a deduction that it is wrong to encourage literature and the arts, and a practical inference that the best use a man can make of his money is to found a systematically irreligious college with it.

"Amphora cœpit

Institui; currente rota cur urceus exit?"

For really, if we deduct the dietetic maxims, very proper in themselves, though expressed with unnecessary extravagance and violence of language; and the description of the beauties of the natural world, gorgeous and glowing enough to command admiration as a mere piece of writing,



but of no particular value in their connection; these four points are the principal original propositions in your lecture.

Yet I must own that, to myself, the perusal of your "Thoughts" caused no disappointment. I enjoyed the blessing promised by Dean Swift to those who expect nothing. I never do expect anything from modern radicalism. For the magnificence of its general promises is the inverse measure of its particular performance. Its professions and practices form a contrast that would be amusing, were it not so lamentable. Proclaiming fraternity and kindred intercourse among all nations, it begins by destroying the citizen's affection for his own country. Preaching brotherly love and sympathy among all classes of the community, it stimulates one class against another by unfounded invectives. Denying the claims and value of ancient lore, it confers the once honored title of professor on every itinerant cobbler. Parading a great show of reverence for the physical and metaphysical sciences, it sets up over their heads the pseudo-sciences of craniology and mesmerism. Barely deigning to believe in God, it has no hesitation to believe in the absurdest ghosts. Ostentatious at times in its patronage of Christianity, it carefully drops out all the vitality of the system, and virtually turns the Saviour of mankind out of his own religion. In short, it is, in all general phraseology, sublime and comprehensive, — in all minutiae of detail, narrow-minded and unwise, — reminding one perpetually of the astrologer in the fable, who was so occupied in watching the stars, that he never saw the pit under his nose until he tumbled into it.

Hoping that your future political and social career may be saved from some of these inconsistencies, that your philanthropic zeal may be tempered by a discriminating judgment, and the charity you feel for some classes may be extended to all; that you may learn to consider a man of property as not necessarily an enemy to society, and the claims of religion, as well as those of benevolence, compatible with a love of literature and art,

I remain

Your obedient servant,  
*New-York, May 15, 1850.*

C. A. B.



*To the Editor of the Literary World, March 1848.*

DEAR SIR: — In submitting to your attention some remarks suggested by your leading article of the 19th ult., I shall not be daunted by the consideration that it may seem "behind the time" to refer to what was written so long ago. Some wiseacre whom I heard or read lately, says that an article in a periodical is seldom of any importance beyond the current week or month. I should think that depended very much on the character of the article and the character of the periodical. And without shocking your modesty so far as to hint that your papers will become standard classics, like the critical writings of Jeffrey, Sidney Smith, and Macaulay (whose name it may be well to inform the accurate editor of the *Democratic Review*, is not spelt Macauley), I may certainly take it for granted that your subscribers have fresh in their memories what you presented to them a month, or less than a month since.

Some correspondent asked you, just for a change, to give "a spicy and personal cut-up of an author." This you refused to do, and your refusal must have called forth the earnest approval of every reader. Personality is one of the most damning vices of criticism, because, laying aside its violation of literary and gentlemanly decorum, it is putting the question of a book's merits on a totally false and irrelevant issue. And it is the more carefully to be avoided because the temptation to it is sometimes very great, when an author's friends and admirers will drag his private life before the public, and insist on making a flourish of trumpets before him every time he goes out to tea. So convinced am I of this, that I would refrain from any approach to it, even in cases where it has become proverbially allowable. If Gracchus were to write a pamphlet against sedition, I would not use a *tu quoque* argument against him.

But while the leading assertion of your article thus carries its own recommendation with it, there are some more general remarks following, which by no means so self-evidently command assent, particularly the conclusion you arrive at, that "that criticism is most true which rather *seeks* the good than the evil;" or to put the pro-



position into a concrete form, that the critic is most true who seeks rather to praise than to blame.

Now, with all due submission, it seems to me, that the spirit of true criticism considered in the abstract, and independently of age or country, cannot be said to have a bias either to praise or blame, its object and purpose being to judge impartially of works of art by rules of art; and that the proper animating spirit of criticism in any age and country will depend upon contingent circumstances, viz. the wants, errors, and tendencies, of the country and period to which it has reference.

To illustrate my meaning. Your conclusion is immediately founded on a very pleasant and ingenious position of Leigh Hunt. But, before making a practical application of his remarks to ourselves, it will be well to examine the peculiar circumstances under which he wrote. When he made his appearance in the critical world, politics influenced all literary judgment in England, and literary and political partisanships were so mingled together, that it seemed almost impossible to separate them. Great poets, more or less intimately associated with Hunt himself, were depreciated, misquoted, and abused, by the Quarterly Review, and the Tory writers generally, on account of their political opinions. I say on account of their political opinions, for it would be absurd to suppose that such men as Gifford and Southey could not discover the genius of such men as Shelley and Keats. The public mind was thus most unfairly prejudiced against these poets, and it required some competent critic to call attention to their beauties. Hunt was the very man. His perfect good humor and gentleness formed a highly prepossessing contrast to the virulence of the Tory reviewers, and his fascinating style conciliated and enticed the most bigoted. It would be curious to inquire how many of his readers Keats owes to Hunt. Another aim of our critic was to excite a more general taste for some of the fathers of English poetry, and especially for Chaucer. In this too he was eminently and deservedly successful.

Now if any similar state of things existed among ourselves; if the literary mind of America, or any large portion, was violently prejudiced against any man or men, from political or other extraneous reasons; if, for instance,



all the Whig *littérateurs* were trying to write down Cooper and Bryant, because they are democrats, or if the whole Southern press had made a dead set at Professor Longfellow because he has written some anti-slavery poems, then we should certainly need judicious praisers, honey-tongued critics, who delight in lingering over beauties themselves, and are skilful in displaying them to others. Or if the founders of our national literature were already becoming neglected; if people began to leave off reading Knickerbocker, and Salmagundi, and the Spy; then, too, we should undoubtedly want a laudatory school of criticism to awaken the public attention to beauties which were escaping it. And, not to take any hypothetical state of things, such a laudatory school we did want at the appearance of Cooper and Irving, to show us what genius was among us, and not leave the discovery to English writers.

But how stands the case now with our literary public? Is its disposition in any way similar to that of the English public, when Leigh Hunt first wrote? Is there anywhere a tendency to decry any native author or school of authors? Does not the fashion run in the very opposite direction, to exaggerated and almost random praise? Can you point out *one instance* of a good book published here for the last ten or twenty years that has not met with merited praise and success? And have not many worthless books been fulsomely eulogised, and, in consequence, sold largely? If these questions must be answered in the affirmative (and it would be difficult to give them any other answer), then is the critic's duty something very different from what it would be in a capacious and prejudiced community.

English criticism has divested itself of its political unfairness. Blackwood has praised Miss Martineau, and been glad to receive Bulwer as a contributor. But the English critics are still high in their standard, and chary of their praise. To compare them with ours in this respect, we must not look merely at the Quarterlies, which only notice a few works at a time, and those such as they can found telling articles upon; but turn to those periodicals which notice more or less briefly all the new publications which they receive. Such are the Athenæum, Literary Gazette, Examiner, Spectator, and those maga-



zines which give an appendix of literary notices. Compare these with corresponding American publications. It will be found that in the latter, the majority of the works noticed are approved of; while in the English periodicals above-mentioned, a very large number, probably a moiety at least, if not a majority of the works noticed, are condemned. In saying that the English critics as a body are men of the best education, and so situated as to be very little subject to extraneous influences, either from authors or publishers, I speak from personal observation and knowledge; and I also speak from personal observation and knowledge in saying that many of our *soi-disant* critics are most indifferently qualified for their task, and that a great deal of what passes for criticism among us, either directly emanates from or is suggested by the large publishers. Thus, it is well known to those behind the scenes, that some houses in this city have their salaried readers connected with the literary department of the daily press. This may be an extreme case, but I fear it is not a solitary one.

But it may be said, "What harm is there after all, if an author is praised more than he deserves to be? Even admitting that praise, when nearly indiscriminate, loses much of its value, and becomes a mere form, why should we not have forms of courtesy and say fine things to one another out of pure compliment, in literary as well as in fashionable society? At any rate it serves to keep up cordiality and good-will, and is therefore preferable to a rigid impartiality, which provokes acrimony and causes mortification." To which I reply, that unmerited and misapplied praise does very positive harm to both reader and author, however convenient and comfortable it may be for the critic.

And first for the reader. When a man is led by an adroit puff to purchase a trashy book — when, as happened to myself not very long ago, he pays five dollars for a work one week, and is glad to sell it at auction for twice as many shillings the next — he suffers a very tangible and most easily appreciated injury in pocket, not to mention the disappointment and vexation which amount almost to a sense of personal injury sustained from the reviewer. Or if less experienced, and more credulous, so that his faith in the critic seduces him not



merely into buying the book, but into believing it to be good, then the mischief is much more serious. His powers of appreciation and discrimination, his taste and judgment, become more or less vitiated by a bad model, or he adopts error while supposing himself to be acquiring information. You say that if the badness of a book predominates, it will soon condemn itself. This depends entirely on what you mean by *soon*. If you mean that in two or three generations a book will be likely to find its level, few will dispute this point; but it by no means follows that a worthless production may not be made to impose upon *part of one generation*, if there is no true friend of the public to unmask it.

Next, as to the author. Let us begin by speaking of the larger class, who *will* write books, *invited Minerva*. I take for granted that it is an act of real kindness to such to dissuade them from continuing in a vocation for which they were not destined by nature; just as, to adopt your own Socratic mode of illustration, if we found a man to be a uniformly unsuccessful shoemaker, the most friendly advice we could give him would be that he should devote his energies to some other trade. But if, on a false theory or out of mere good nature, we praise what is not praiseworthy, the subjects of our panegyric are directly encouraged to persevere in a mistaken course.

It is more serious matter when we have to deal with authors who possess real merit tarnished by great defects. The best thing that can happen to them is that they should clear themselves of their blemishes; and accordingly while all credit is given to their excellences, these blemishes should be strictly noticed. Nothing is more natural than that a writer should be ignorant of his own errors, particularly faults of style and expression; and though in some cases wounded pride will make him persist in them after they are pointed out, in most instances he will be inclined to profit by the criticism, even if not over well-disposed towards the critic. But if his characteristic vices are never animadverted upon, they will be sure to grow upon him, and he will deteriorate, instead of improving. And this will help us to account for the singular fact (I think it may be called a fact; at least I have never heard the proposition disputed), *that the earliest works of American authors are almost invariably*



*their best.* The effects of an opposite course of criticism may be seen in two English poets of the present day, Tennyson and Patmore. Tennyson had always a clique of friends (not mere toadies and small *littérateurs* either, but clever men themselves, among whom it will be sufficient to mention Thackeray and Monckton Milnes), to praise and puff what he wrote. But there were also independent critics in England, and consequently his first volumes of poems, two thirds of which are now self-condemned, being deemed by their author unworthy of republication, met with some rough handling. Very probably he and his were not particularly pleased at the time, but he profited by the criticism, as the success of his re-appearance ten years afterwards proves. And it is worth mentioning, to show how he profited by criticism even when one-sided and malevolent, that out of some pages full of passages which the Quarterly Review found fault with, he has amended all but one. Compare this with — but it is as well to mention no names on this side the Atlantic. One word of Patmore. He published a small volume of poems before attaining his majority. A number of English critics, headed by Douglas Jerrold, and some of the writers in Punch, were lavish in their eulogies of this first effort. These indiscreet panegyrics produced some counter-reviews, which erred as much on the other side.\* Their effect, however, has been to keep the young aspirant quiet ever since. If he really has the making of a poet in him (which some competent judges believe in spite of Blackwood), it will doubtless come out at the proper age. Had he been born in America and appeared with an American Jerrold to back him, he would have gone on publishing every three or six months, and kept confirming and aggravating his worst faults instead of waiting till they shall be corrected by study and maturity.

You say that “a book, like a man, should be judged by its goodness rather than its badness.” The illustration is appropriate, being liable to the very same excep-

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\* Particularly one in Blackwood, which was not improbably prompted by a sort of hereditary feud. Patmore's father (under the signature of *King Tims*), was one of the original contributors to Blackwood, and afterwards quarrelled with and cut or was cut by the connexion.



tions and qualifications as the position which it illustrates. I should judge a man by his goodness *or* his badness, entirely with reference to the character and condition of those persons whom my judgment was to affect. If I were conversing with a man who had been soured and made misanthropic by ill success or ill treatment, or who had sapped his faith by reading French novels, or in any other way acquired an unhealthy tone of feeling, so that he was predisposed to look at the worst side of human nature, and suspicious of every one, I should, in speaking of other men, make a point of dwelling on their merits and showing the good that was in them. But were I associated with an over sanguine and confiding youth, I should not be anxious to praise all those around us, but should rather try to put him on his guard against their faults. This "jolly good fellow" is a *roué*, and will lead you into bad courses if you follow him implicitly; this plausible gentleman will draw you into a doubtful speculation; this beauty will make a fool of you if she can; and so on. And thus my judgment would in each case call the attention of the party for whose benefit it was made, to what he would of himself be likely to overlook.

Doubtless there is a public propensity among us to devour books indiscriminately; but this is the very reason why the critic (who is supposed to be, to a greater or less extent, a public guide and instructor) should, so far from consenting to pamper this propensity, do his very best to diminish both the supply and the demand. If books, like boots, were in a few years either utterly worn out or unfashionable and comparatively useless, then would new books be as much a "need" to the community as new boots; but when we consider that a really good book, when once established as such, is a *κτῆμα ἐς αἰῶνα*, the multiplication of indifferent and mediocre works must be regarded as a positive nuisance. If not a single volume were to be published for the next twelve months, no one would be the worse for it except the publishers. The intellectual appetite of the literary public would be in no danger of suffering starvation. An Egyptian famine could not exhaust the supplies it has inherited.

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*To the Editors of the Literary World, Paris, February 7, 1852.*

MESSRS. EDITORS: — Some time ago, you thought it worth while to publish a sketch of the *coup d'état* as it fell under my experience and that of my friends. Written in great haste, and most of it while the events were actually going on, that sketch pretended only to give the impressions of the moment; any philosophy expressed in or deducible from it, is hardly a proper subject of criticism. Since reading it over, however, as it appeared in your columns, I have thought that some passages in it might possibly be misconstrued into an avowal of sentiments very different from my real ones — and I should hope, from those of every American. The irony of the concluding sentences could not, indeed, except by wilful perversion, be interpreted as signifying approval or admiration of Louis Napoleon; but it might be said that the whole subject was treated too lightly, that the liberties of a great nation are not laughing matter, and that to talk jestingly of an usurpation argued indifference to some of man's highest interests. Now, though it has been my fate to be called more than once, and in good round type too, aristocrat, monarchist — and what not? — I stoutly insist upon being considered a genuine republican, and should be very sorry to have any respectable man suppose that I am not, or that I consider it to be a trifling matter to a country whether it is under a republic or a despotism. But at the same time, I wished only to depict, as graphically as I could, the outside appearance of things, the *quæque vidi et quorum pars fui*, reserving the serious discussion of the matter to another opportunity. That opportunity having arrived, I now purpose to give you, in all gravity, my ideas upon this extraordinary and most successful usurpation. In the first place, it may be well to observe that my remarks do not pretend to much originality. Most of what is said in them has been said before, and by Americans, though more to the English than the American public; but the particular truths enlarged upon are so often lost sight of in vague generalities, that they will well bear repetition.

The successful usurpation of Louis Napoleon Buonaparte, as it now stands confirmed and ratified by the vote



of France, is certainly a most remarkable phenomenon. It met with no resistance worth speaking of, whatever disturbances took place in the capital or the departments being greatly exaggerated, and in some places actually fomented by the party in power for their own purposes. It was executed by second-rate men.\* All the *great* men of the country, with the possible exception of M. Guizot, are either silent or in opposition. In the list of the exiles, not in that of the Council of State, are the true "*illustrations*" of the country to be found. It has received the approbation of a majority, the acquiescence of a large majority of the French people. For to say that the election was a complete piece of fraud and stupendous juggling, as some English papers still persist in doing, seems little short of absurdity. How is it *possible* to bribe, or cajole, or intimidate more than nine millions of voters, *voting by ballot too*, to stultify themselves? How does the supposition tally with the fact that in Paris, where the government had most opportunities to bring into play any schemes of corruption or intimidation, there was the greatest proportion of negative votes? People talk of the repressive force exercised by the army, as if there had not been an army in 1830 and 1848, with this important difference in favor of former dynasties, that, on the present occasion, all generals of reputation were averse to the government. There would have been no want of leaders to a popular movement, if the people had willed one. No, there can be little doubt that the President's move was approved of by great numbers of the French people, and that a very large majority of them have, at least, acquiesced in it.

Now, when we ask *why* this is so; how it happens that the majority of the nation were so ready to resign all power to a self-appointed Dictator, the answer given by the French themselves is utterly astounding to an

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\* [This was written without taking sufficient account of the marvellous man who in appropriating all the political power of the country, seems also to have appropriated all its political intelligence. It was a pretty general error, common to nearly all the English and nearly all the American public. Alas for our pride of intellect and our capacity to look through the millstone of futurity! There was just *one man* in all Anglo-Saxondom who foresaw and foretold the destined glory of the Prisoner of Ham. That man was — Peel or Brougham or Webster? No, but Mr. Wykoff.]



Anglo-Saxon — the cause is so strangely disproportionate to the effect. The people were afraid of the Socialists; they suspected a general conspiracy against law and property which was to break out in insurrection during the present year; and, therefore, they put themselves into the power of the man who promised to deliver them from this calamity. Now no one will accuse me of underrating the mischievous, barbarizing, unchristianizing, every way destructive tendency of Socialist doctrines. A certain amount of harm, and no small one, they have done in France, and must do wherever they exist. But the French socialists were not imminently dangerous, either from their numbers or their influence. There were perhaps a hundred thousand of them in the whole country. Was that a number to terrify eleven millions of voters out of their wits and their liberties? The very class on whom they trusted, the working men, had seen completely through them in several instances, and laughed at their overtures. If a New-Yorker were to propose that General James Watson Webb should be made Dictator of the State to put down the Anti-Renters, he would generally be suspected of insanity. Yet such a proceeding would be more rational than that of the French, for the Anti-Renters are still rampant and mischievous, whereas the Socialists in France were subjugated and harmless at the close of last year. A fairer illustration would be to suppose that the people of the whole Union had conferred dictatorial powers on President Fillmore, through fear of the riots against the Fugitive Slave law which have occurred in three or four places. Or to take the case of the British empire, it is as if all Ireland were put under martial law on account of the agrarian disturbances in some parts of it, or as if Lord John Russell had been invested with supreme power at the time of the Chartist demonstration.\*

Now to say that the French are not *fit* or not *prepared* for a republic; that we are the only people who are, and, at least, that the Anglo-Saxon race is the only

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\* On which occasion, by the way, Louis Napoleon acted as special constable, and paraded Regent street in company with the present Lord Stanley, who was engaged in the same amateur duty. He must then have seen how little open and tangible danger there was in this phantom of Socialism, and may have learned, at the same time, how great use could be made of it.



race that is — this is a very unsatisfactory solution of the puzzle. For *why* are the French not as competent to have a republic as we? Are they so deficient intelligence? Are they so much our inferiors in education? Are they not better members of society in some respects, more temperate, more obedient to authority, less brutal? And, first of all, there is an important discrimination to be made, not always sufficiently attended to. Is the capacity of France for republicanism merely a question of *time*? Allowing that the French do not know how to be republicans now, is it reasonable to expect that they will learn to be? In fine, should we say that the French are not *prepared* for a republic, or that they are not *fit* for one? This must be determined in the outset, and for my own part, I have no hesitation in agreeing with the sagacious author of "A States-Man's" Letter in the *Times*, that they are not *fit*, and not likely to learn if they were to go on for a hundred years trying experiments at the rate of a new Constitution every five years, because there are inherent elements in the French character (certain to endure as long as Frenchmen are Frenchmen) which render them incapable of managing a republic well, consequently unable to appreciate its benefits, consequently careless of retaining them, consequently ready to yield them up to any bold usurper.

In the first place, then, a Frenchman is in the habit of looking to his government to help him when he ought to be helping himself; of calling out for Hercules instead of putting his own shoulders to the wheel. "The people expect too much from the government," might be said by any and every constitutional ruler of France. A Frenchman votes or electioneers for this or that ministry, expecting that the minister will give him or his relations a place, or pension, or order; or do such and such things for his particular trade or manufacturing interest, or the like — not from a single and simple conviction that his party is the best for the country. He can't see the use of working for the government, if he is not in turn to *exploiter* it in some way. Not that he is unpatriotic: he would fight to the death in his country's defence at home, or for her glory and aggrandizement abroad; but he cannot comprehend the combination of self-dependence and self-abnegation necessary in a republican citizen. He is accustomed to the visible inter-



ference of the government everywhere, and he believes that it can do anything — make water run up hill, or the three-hooped pot have ten hoops!

All this is essentially anti-republican; for the citizen of a republic must be prepared to give rather than receive the initiative. His government must be his instrument rather than his Providence. His fortune must depend on his own exertions; his honors must be ultimately derived from the people, his fellow-citizens. If he will be jobbing and mercenary and dishonest in his politics, he must impose upon the people rather than sell himself to the Executive. That government is best for him — not which governs least, as has been falsely said — but which is *least felt in governing*.

Secondly, the Frenchman must have a *highly decorated* government. A government of show and pomp and parade, with no end of soldiers and horses, and trappings and fine clothes. A government which can give entertainments without regard to expense, and ostentatious largesses, charitable or otherwise, without limit. When Louis-Philippe, in the early part of his reign, before his people took to shooting at him, used to walk about unattended in a plain citizen's dress, shaking hands with the public, they did not know what to make of it, and he was sometimes actually insulted.\*

This, again, is an anti-republican feeling. I do not say that it is incompatible with a love of or capacity for liberal institutions, such as those of a limited monarchy for instance. There is much of the same feeling in England. I once had endless difficulty in convincing an Englishman — a highly educated man too — how we could respect an Executive who only drove two horses; and there are doubtless tens of thousands of Londoners who believe that the Queen's gilt coach and eight cream-colors are an integral part of the British constitution. But it is certainly anti-republican, for *simplicity* is an essential in a republican government. How thoroughly imbued our people are with this principle is too obvious to need extended comment. When the chief magistrate visits any of our great cities, all the curiosity and respect

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\* A Carlist nobleman presented him with a sheet of gingerbread, which, being called in French *pavé*, was supposed to imply a sarcastic allusion to the barricades.



and enthusiasm excited are for the man alone, without regard to his outward accessories; no one thinks of remarking whether the horses match exactly, or the carriage is of the newest fashion, or the driver wears an old hat — or the President himself one for that matter. And any attempt to increase the President's salary or contingent emoluments would certainly fail, even in the case of the most popular chief magistrate conceivable.

Thirdly, the French are a people with luxurious tastes and inclinations, over curious in dress and diet, effeminate and fastidious in all things, lazy except in pursuit of pleasure, and never loving work for work's sake, as Anglo-Saxons do. That this is the case with the upper classes, all who have had opportunities of observing them will admit; but I also believe it to be true of the other classes to a much greater extent than is commonly supposed — that, for instance, French servants eat more and work less, their opportunities being equal, than English, Irish, or American ones, and that, if certain descriptions of tradesmen live very frugally, it is from sheer necessity and not from choice. Now luxurious and idle habits are inimical not only to republican, but to all free institutions. I may be met by the example of England. The English aristocracy are ostentatious and gorgeous in the extreme, pompous in their retainers and profuse in their expenses, but they are *not* personally luxurious. They are neither finical in dress nor fastidious at table. They delight in athletic sports; they voluntarily seek hard work in Parliament or on the country justice's Bench. They undergo privations in travelling for the sake of seeing foreign countries. They do not let either their bodily or their mental powers run to waste.

I may also be reminded that a certain class in our Atlantic cities have carried material luxury to a pitch unsurpassed in any part of the Old World. But in the first place, this class have no political power or influence whatever; they do not strive for any, and they could not get it if they did. Secondly, the American has (and it is one of his peculiar superiorities over *all* Europeans, and especially over all Celts) an eternal potentiality of work in him. He never loses his manliness entirely, but can always un-Sybaritize himself, and go off to the backwoods, or China, or California, if any pressing



necessity arises, or even without any pressing necessity.

But are luxurious habits dangerous to free institutions? I answer unqualifiedly in the affirmative, not meaning, however, by so doing, to declaim in favor of the "state of nature," or against great cities, or great fortunes in great cities; to say that the capitalist is a feudal tyrant and the enemy of the people, or any nonsense of that sort. It stands to reason that in every great and wealthy country there must be individual wealth, and even a certain ostentation of individual wealth. And a man may make parade of his riches in horses and flunkies, or libraries, or works of art, or entertainments, as his taste lies, and through the abuse of any of these things may grow proud, or conceited, or exclusive, or what is called aristocratic, or absurd and wicked in many ways; yet still as long as he does not effeminate himself, as long as he remains hardy and vigorous in mind and body, and does not become lazy and Sybaritic and wrapped up in trifles, so long is he not unfit or unable to sustain the privileges of a free citizen. Many a young Parisian, who lives on ten or fifteen thousand francs a year, is more un-manned and un-republicanized by luxurious habits, than an English peer with his colossal fortune.

Once more, the French are prone (I do not profess to give all these traits in any logical sequence, for it is doubtful if they have any, though traces of them all are visible in the final result) to aim at *realizing the ideal*, instead of idealizing the real. The ability to reform without destroying, to mend the old political fabric without pulling it down altogether and having nothing to live in meanwhile, to improve existing institutions rather than draught new constitutions on paper — this is one of the most glorious superiorities of the Anglo-Saxon race. Nearly all the Continental nations are deficient in this respect — not, I humbly submit, for want of political experience — they have had plenty of that in the last sixty years — but from sheer want of the *reforming capacity*. But this trait is more injurious to the French than to any other European nation, because their greater brilliancy of imagination leads them more readily to extemporize political theories, while their want of faith (of



which we shall have more to say by-and-by) prevents them from clinging to their own inventions long and firmly enough to give them a fair trial.

Again, the French as a nation are liable to fits of political panic. It is obvious that such a disposition must be perilous to the existence of any limited government. If (to refer to our own country again for purpose of illustration) the American people had believed the Union to be really in danger from the agitation of the Abolition question — if they had taken for gospel all that was said by fanatics, and toadies, and newspaper scribblers on both sides, and, through fear of the Garrisonites or the very absurd persons in South Carolina, had been ready to confer extraordinary powers on the executive, it is evident that this very panic-induced readiness would have been a temptation to the executive to demand extraordinary powers. But is there not something puzzling in the fact of this propensity to panic on the part of a nation who in battle are among the bravest in the world? Perhaps if we look into it a little more closely, we shall see that the truth so well expressed by our great dramatist, "Conscience doth make cowards of us all," will go some way towards explaining the paradox.

The French have long boasted to be the most refined of modern nations. This claim has been to a great extent admitted; to a great extent it is true. In all elegances of manner, in grace, tact, ability to please and amuse, in *positive* civility as distinguished from the negative politeness of the Englishman, they have no equals. They also claim to be the most civilized people — and this also is true, looking to *material* civilization only. Occasional exceptions may be taken here and there; the English are better judges of horses, the Americans of wine, the Poles dance better, and so on; but on the average of all comfortable or luxurious appliances, in all things that come under the dominion of that mysterious deity *fashion*, the Parisians are far in the van of the world, and Paris is emphatically, the metropolis of pleasure, amusement, and elegance. Nor does this material civilization, as in some other places, exist without or in opposition to mental refinement, and talent; the fine arts come in to the help of the coarse; lively and witty, well educated and accomplished critics, patrons — capricious to be sure, but



still intelligent patrons of artists — the French can well boast of their superiority in every species of civilization but one — that one, alas! the highest — the moral.

When I saw in print what I had written last December, about *the utter worthlessness of refinement as a test of real civilization and progress*, it looked somewhat hard and violent, and though subsequent reflection has convinced me more than ever of its truth, a few words of explanation may be allowed me, to prevent misconception.

Never was it my intention to deny — indeed it would have been absurd to do so — that refinement in itself is a very good and desirable thing. It is always better *cæteris paribus* that a man should be refined than clownish, that a woman should dress well than ill, that a dinner should be tempting than unsatisfactory. Man was made to live in society, and all knowledge that makes people get on more comfortably in society, that promotes good feeling and geniality, is not to be despised; but on the contrary, highly honored, *so long as it keeps in its own place*. Thus, the art of giving dinners or entertainments of any kind properly, is one which it is well for every person of substance to acquire. Nay, we may go further, and say that politeness is a part of religion, and that a man's refinement of taste may often be a valuable auxiliary to his principles. But what I insist is, that we must not admit politeness to be the *whole* or the *greater part* of religion or refinement, to stand *instead* of principle; that there is always danger of this being the case; that it frequently is the case; that the greatest refinement and the greatest moral turpitude are perfectly compatible, that they co-existed in ancient Athens, and co-exist in modern France; that therefore, in short, refinement is entirely fallacious as a *test* or a *sign* of moral superiority or the highest civilization. I think this mistaken propensity of the French to put manners before or instead of morals, will help to account for one of the problems in French politics; the fact of *Paris being France*, as it is frequently expressed, the utterly subordinate condition of the provinces. The provincial is more virtuous than the inhabitant of the metropolis; he is at least as brave; but he is a clown in comparison, no critic in the fine arts or the coarse, fearful of Parisian ridicule and dazzled



from afar by Parisian splendor. Such a mental power does the capital wield over the departments, greater I am convinced than the mechanical one obtained by the system of centralization.

This substitution of *manners* for *morals* brings us to an important branch of our subject.

French immorality has long been a standard theme for declamation among Anglo-Saxon writers, so long that a little exaggeration in their treatment of the subject might not unnaturally be suspected; and yet the young man who visits Paris fresh from a Protestant country may well say that the half has not been told him. Let us give the devil his due; the French have an advantage of us in one respect. They are not a people prone to excess in strong drink. They are more temperate than the Scandinavians, the Scotch, the English, the non-total abstinence portion of the Americans. (This, by the way, is a little nut for the temperance fanatics among us: it may show them that their pet virtue is not the necessary parent and attendant of all others.) But, as regards what is more technically called immorality, the condition of Paris has not been exaggerated by any of those who have written on it — indeed, it is hardly capable of exaggeration. It is open and glaring every-where; he who walks may read it. The splendid print-shops on the Boulevards and in the other thoroughfares, are crowded with prints which just stop short of indecency and carry elegant voluptuousness to its utmost limits. At the theatres, there is a constant fire of questionable jokes, fornication, and adultery, the latter especially, being never failing subjects of mirth to a Parisian audience. That a young man — say twenty-six years old — should be married, is such a phenomenon to a Frenchman, that you can with difficulty persuade him of its existence. The young Parisian's mistress is a part of his establishment as much of course as his valet or his umbrella; he does not hesitate to talk about her to his sister or to any lady of his acquaintance. The most notorious lorettes occupy the best places in the theatres, vie with the greatest ladies in their equipages and dress, are canonized on the stage, and immortalized in the *feuilleton*. Indeed, fornication is too common and necessary a practice to be made much fun of; but adultery, I repeat, is a



standing joke. A deceived and dishonored husband is an eternal subject of mirth to a Parisian. Now, to come back to our original theme, I believe — the reader may verify or disprove it from his own knowledge and study — that no unchaste people, especially no people that habitually made light of the marriage tie, ever was able to preserve a republican government long. (By a Republic, I do not mean a close oligarchy like the Venetian.) I believe that what Catullus said, apostrophizing the god of wedlock, —

“The land that will not render  
Service unto thee,  
Can have no defender  
For its borders free.”

was true then and has been ever since, and that the united testimony of history will shew it.

But it is well not to dwell too long on this point, lest we should forget that this licentiousness, shocking as it is, is not the most crying fault of the nation. The great and awful sin of the French is a negative one — their want of faith, their Mephistophelean incredulity for virtue, their Manichean belief in the success of evil, their Epicurean belief in things material only. Faith is surely the entelechy, the vital, energizing principle of Christianity. Christian faith was a new element introduced into theology; not like sanctioning and defining points of morality which had been imperfectly understood and rudely practised before, but something of which the Heathen had no conception: it was a new idea impressed on the human mind. And it is just this idea which the French have destroyed among themselves. They have no abiding and realizing faith in the superintending interference of God; they cannot even sincerely echo the saying of the Greek tragedian, that the Deity is still mighty in Heaven, overseeing and ruling things below! They have no faith in the existence of great moral principles, truth, purity, integrity. They have no faith in God's creatures, man or woman, in the veracity and fidelity of the one or the virtue of the other. What little faith remains in the country is to be found in the relics of the Legitimist party, and theirs is a faith too nearly allied to superstition and bigotry, a faith which is not inconsistent with



narrow-mindedness and hatred of truth, which does not interfere with intolerance on the one hand or immorality on the other, which does not hinder the *Corsaire*, for instance, from abusing the English and the Americans, Kossuth and Palmerston, in the most shameless way, as an interlude to its indecent narratives of actresses and its sneers at domestic life. Such a want of faith in a people is the most fatal of sins, because it is the least curable. A man may be dissipated, profane, criminal; it is a shame and a sorrow that he should be so. But so long as he acknowledges the existence of virtue, so long as he says: "I am not good, but there are those who are, and there is such a thing as goodness;" so long as he approves the *meliora* though he may run after the *deteriora*, so long there is hope for him: but when he has acquired a disbelief in virtue, and will neither be good himself nor allow any one else to be so, then is his condition fearful indeed. Moralists have erred in dwelling exclusively or chiefly on the *indecenty* of French literature; they have applied to the Parisian novelists a test which would equally banish Rabelais and Swift and Aristophanes, and give us only family editions of Shakespeare. It is the want of belief in virtue, the chaos of principles, the apotheosis of vice, that constitutes the true mischief of these books.

*How* this unhappy condition of the French mind was brought about is a much disputed and much disputable question of history. The Legitimists, and the friends of old-established despotism generally throughout Europe, of course, attribute it to the excesses of the first Revolution. Liberals, as naturally, carry the causes of it farther back; and a good Protestant may be pardoned for suspecting that it is something like a judgment on the nation, for having, in old times, deliberately preferred error to truth, and intolerance to toleration; that the wicked schemes of Madame de Maintenon, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the persecutions which drove out of France the most virtuous part of its population, have been fearfully avenged on the generations succeeding. But whatever be the cause, the melancholy fact is too apparent. The sole belief of the French is material and Manichean, confessing the power of the Prince of this world. For Religion, they have set up



what their writers profanely call Love, but which it is not easy to represent in one word decently and truthfully at the same time — perhaps the nearest expression to it would be *Passion*. For inward principle, they have set up outward manner; for a test of merit, they have taken — the only test they can comprehend — tangible worldly success. Hence, with the greatest refinement, and a very great intellectual superiority, the French have *no moral elevation whatever*. They talk a great deal about virtue, and purity, and honor, and self-denial; you will hear more about these on the French stage, and in French books and newspapers, than you will in any other country: but it is all talk, sheer *blague*, meaning nothing except to throw dust in one's eyes. They are positively incompetent to appreciate true greatness of soul. See, for instance, how the reception of Kossuth by the American people has affected the French. They were utterly unable to comprehend it. That a defeated and fugitive exile, who had nothing to give, but was himself in want of everything; that such a man should be welcomed as a hero, and his progress through a great country be like a triumphal march, was a worship of the setting sun beyond their understanding. They could only account for it by supposing that the Americans were so puerile or so *blasés* as to run after the most insignificant objects of curiosity. A scribbler in a French newspaper calling Kossuth an insignificant object! This moral incapacity shows itself in a thousand ways — in giving *prizes for virtue*, and having moral comedies *written to order*; in the utter disregard for oaths and *à fortiori* for pledges, which so notoriously distinguishes French politicians; in the inability of French novelists, so exceedingly clever in the delineation of wickedness, to create a good man, an orthodox hero of romance.

Now, to come back to our theme again; the old saying about virtue being peculiarly necessary to the duration of a republic, hacknied as it has become, often denied as it has been, I fully receive and endorse. The only danger is that, in drawing inferences from it, citizens of a republic may reason the wrong way, and say: *Because we are a Republic, therefore we are the most virtuous people in the world*; instead of: *If we wish to secure our Republic, we must preserve our virtue*. But faith is



also most necessary, strong faith, in the institutions of the Republic, which does not prevent a wholesome watchfulness of individuals, or indeed, it must be added with sorrow, an occasional abuse of this watchfulness into unfair and embarrassing suspicions. The French have not this strong political faith; they have never had it, from the time of Louis XIV. down to this day. The frequent changes of their government are enough to show it. Had they believed in any of their governments since 1789 — even in that of Napoleon — with the same earnestness which we entertain for our Constitution, it must have stood in spite of all the pressure from without.

It has been stated that the French are destitute of moral elevation. At the same time, they are very intelligent, and very *impressionable* — ready to admire what they understand — that is to say, any achievement of courage or talent. Hence it follows that a man who is clever, daring, and successful, *loses no moral ground by being unscrupulous*; his dishonesties, his illegalities, his perjuries, do not excite the same popular indignation that they would in England or America. Every reader can make the application for himself, without its being necessary for me to say anything personal in reference to the Prince-President. The French have admitted success as the test of merit; the end of *success* justifies, in their eyes, the adoption of all means. Such *could* not be the case in England or America.

Well, the French have chosen their government, as they had a perfect right to. *Si populus vult decipi decipiatur*. But Americans may draw one or two lessons from the present occurrences in France.

1. Louis Napoleon has been elected and re-elected by universal suffrage. *Ergo*, universal suffrage is not necessarily of itself a preservative against tyranny. Like all other kinds of suffrage, its effect depends upon the character and wisdom of those who exercise it, not on any virtue or charm inherent in its name or form.

2. England has at present, and has had for years :

- a. Free right of travel through her territory without passports ;
- b. A free Press ;
- c. Free right of public meetings.



France has none of these things, and never had for any length of time.

The first and second of these rights affect foreigners as well as citizens. Every American who has lived in England, and in France, has the difference of the two countries in respect of personal liberty brought home to him every day.

Can any rational man hesitate as to which is the free country, France or England?

Can any American, who *is* an American, hesitate as to which country has more points of sympathy with our own?

*Knickerbocker, February 1852.*

AN INTERCEPTED PARISIAN EPISTLE. — We have great pleasure in presenting the accompanying '*Letter from Colonel Cranberry Fuster to Jefferson J. Grabster, Junior, Esquire, Acting Editor Pro. Tem. of the Oldport Daily Twaddler.*'

ED. KNICKERBOCKER.

*Paris, Rue St. On-a-ray, November 10, 1851.*

'MY DEAR JEFFERSON: We have always maintained, as you doubtless remember, that it does a young man, or even a middle-aged man, much good to see something of foreign lands; not that he can possibly hope to learn any thing there, especially in the way of morals or politics, but because (according to the popular belief, to dissent from which would be flat blasphemy) his experience of other countries must infallibly make him more contented and better satisfied with his own. Such a lesson cannot but be of great value, and is worth being learned thoroughly: it is therefore gratifying to find so many of our countrymen, particularly the more juvenile portion, disposed to learn it thoroughly. They frequently occupy several years in comparing the institutions of benighted Europe with our own, and studying the phases of life under despotic or semi-despotic governments, among all sexes and classes of the population. It can hardly be doubted that, when they return, it will



be with a thorough appreciation of and preference for the manners, morals, and tastes of our own happy hemisphere.

'Our numerous friends and subscribers will doubtless be desirous to know, in the first place, the particulars and incidents of our outward-bound trip. Unfortunately, our journal was interrupted very early in the passage; to say the truth, (which we may be permitted to do in the present instance, having nothing to gain by adopting a contrary course.) we have but a very indistinct recollection of what took place during the first thirty-six hours. Even after our ideas began to assume a more definite shape, and our locomotive and digestive faculties had recovered their pristine vigor, we found considerable difficulty in eliciting all the information we could have wished respecting the other passengers. Most of them seemed singularly stupid and incommunicative, although we took good care to let them know who we were, and left several copies of the '*Twaddler*' on the saloon-table.

'As to the steamer herself, the '*Screw-driver*' may justly be called a floating palace. *She a' n't any thing else*; and her officers are men who deserve to win and have won golden opinions from every one. The captain secured us a seat near his own at table, and helped us out of his own champagne-bottle every day, so that we were enabled to dispense altogether with the usual formality of a wine-bill: of course he is a scholar and a gentleman; and as the mate smuggled through several thousand cigars for us, we cannot do less than pronounce him a most enterprising and gentlemanly man. The day before our arrival in port, we had the pleasure of proposing our commander's health in a speech of twenty minutes' length. At the conclusion of our remarks, the passengers manifested the liveliest satisfaction. The only dissentient voice was that of a specimen of 'Young New-York,' who audibly expressed a wish that 'he could get some of the gas out of that speech to put into the ale!' The impudent little sprig of codfish-aristocracy! The ale was quite good enough for him; I'll be bound he never drank as good at home; or if he did, it was because his father was a bankrupt, and cheated his creditors. But in truth, this young animal was of an



insolence altogether insufferable: he did n't know his place, nor who he was talking to, and continually spoke of newspaper correspondents, and even of editors, just as if we were mere ordinary vagabonds; whereas your readers will acquit me of vanity when I say this much, that we are frequently very extraordinary ones.

'Another passenger, who gave himself very unnecessary airs, was a Mr. Carl Benson, from the city of Gotham, a person of strongly-marked British sympathies, and a venomous enemy of republican institutions. I have reason to suspect him of being in the pay of Lord Palmerston, and that he has been hired to abuse our Southern brethren in the English periodicals. From a conversation in his state-room which I overheard, (accidentally, of course,) I gather that he is at present concocting for *Frazer's Edinburgh Magazine*, a scandalous, inflammatory, and would-be pathetic story on the subject of the *Fugitive Slave Law*. He showed his aristocratic disposition during the whole voyage by wearing the oldest clothes, never smoking, and drinking nothing but water; but this may also have been owing to the embarrassed state of his finances; for I was told that . . .

[Here we are constrained to omit a number of assertions and suppositions respecting our correspondent, Carl, and various members of his family, because we have no reason to suppose them accurate, nor, if ever so accurate, of the slightest public interest.

ED. KNICKERBOCKER.]

'This young gentleman's *criticism* was on a par with his other opinions. One day I found him making merry over an article in the '*Young Ladies' Magazine*,' a perfect gem, entitled, *The Death of Cæsar*, and for which we are indebted to the pen of that sweet songstress of Arkansas, Anna Maria Mathilda Biggs, who had on this occasion confined her aspiring pinions by the bands of prose; and, sooth to say, she danced in her fetters most gracefully. On my polite inquiry what there might be in this elegant composition that had so moved his mirth, he pointed disdainfully to the following sentence:

"A gun from the Capitol announced the approach of Cæsar."

'It is unnecessary to dilate on the obvious anachronism.



But can a gushing, impulsive, self-educated, inspiration-rapt female be expected to remember these niceties of scholarship like a small book-worm? And what must we think of the man's soul who could pronounce on the merits of a *whole article* from reading *one sentence* of it?

'Among our passengers were three Jesuit priests from Canada. I always make it a point to be civil to such people, on the principle that some African tribes worship the d—l; there is no knowing how much harm they may do you else some day. We had also on board four Protestant clergymen, of different denominations. When the first Sunday came, all the seven wanted to preach at once. We were obliged to submit their claims to the decision of the ballot. I gave my vote for the Catholics, in accordance with the true theory of social-democratic liberality and toleration: *'Always go against your own church, and never into any.'*

'We landed at Havre. Of this place I will not say that it *always* rains there, having had pretty positive experience that it *sometimes* snows. The difference in intellectual progress between the Europeans and ourselves was strikingly manifested from the first. This benighted population had never heard of the *'Oldport Twaddler!'* I doubt if even a copy of the *'New-York Sewer'* could have been found in the whole town! Of course I made the shortest possible stay in this moral wilderness, and hurried on to the capital of France, where I am now pleasantly enough lodged in the *'Sinkiame,'* as they call it; but you do not sink at all to arrive at it: on the contrary, you have to mount either five or six stories, I am not sure which, for I always get put out in counting the steps. These elevated situations are recommended by the medical students, and others well acquainted with the laws of physiology, on account of the greater purity of the atmosphere. Our street derives its appellation from the fact that the saint to whom it is dedicated (St. Peter, I believe) is represented in the pictures as sliding down from heaven on a sun-beam, and is therefore called *Saint On-a-ray*.

'The disaffection of the people toward the government, and their admiration of and longing for our *really* republican institutions is so openly manifested on all occasions, that he who runs can't help reading. Every



tradesman who called on me with his commodities took occasion to contrast their condition with ours, and to wish for a republic like the American. Mr. Benson, who was present during one of these gratifying demonstrations on the part of a hair-dresser, muttered something about 'black' which I did not quite understand, and assured me that the man was 'coming soft-sawder over me,' and trying to empty my purse by stuffing me with praise of my country. But this explanation must be put down to the anti-republican bias of its author. I really do not think the French generally equal to such a dodge, for in some similar matters I have found them very slow of comprehension. For instance, when I tried to impress on my boot-maker that if he furnished me with a pair of new patent-leathers *gratis*, I might in return benefit his connection very much by mentioning him favorably in the columns of the '*Twaddler*,' and recommending him to our countrymen visiting Paris: would you believe it? the stupid fellow could not be made to see the advantage of such an arrangement, and obstinately insisted on being paid in the current coin of the realm!

'Although rather pressed for time as yet, I have seen some of the lions. My first visit was naturally to the world-renowned cathedral of *Notre Dame*, (pronounced '*Not a d—n*') immortalized by its historical associations, and not less by having been the subject of a most original romance from the fertile pen of Madame Dudevant, better known by the *nom-de-plume* of George Sand. This majestic but somewhat dilapidated edifice has recently been undergoing considerable renovations; a process which might be extended with advantage to some of the other churches and public buildings. A countryman, whom I met on his return from Italy, informs me that this is still more the case in that unhappy priest-and-king-ridden country, where *all* the public edifices, he assured me, were very much out of repair. Such are the withering effects of despotism!

'But the last revolution here, partially counteracted though its effects have been by the intrigues of the Prince-President and his reactionary myrmidons, has left some glorious *souvenirs*; (you see I am beginning to acquire sufficient familiarity with the language to express myself in it occasionally;) among others, the triumphant



inscription of progress, *Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite*, which appears in large black letters on all the national property, from the Church of God to the post-office for letters; from the proud palace of Louis Napoleon to the public wood-yard (*Timbre National*) in the *Rue de la Paie*. I was somewhat puzzled, however, to observe under almost every one of these mottoes an additional one, '*Dé-fense d'afficher*;' Passing by one of these, with a French acquaintance, who possesses some knowledge of our language, and inquiring of him its meaning, he translated it, 'It is forbidden to stick;' but on attempting to explain himself farther, became so embarrassed that I saw there was a sore point somewhere, and forbore to press him. Mr. Benson afterward let me into the mystery. It seems that, during the commotions which accompanied and followed the revolution of February, some of the apostles of freedom carried their zeal so far as to preach and sometimes practise the doctrine, that all aristocrats and enemies of the people should be disposed of by assassination. It therefore became necessary for the Provisional Government to mark, in the most decided way, their disapprobation of having recourse to such extreme means, which they did by the inscription aforesaid. The radicals at present confine themselves to making fun of the aristocrats, or 'silk-stocking gentry,' on all opportunities, on which account they are called '*mock-socks*.' While on this subject, I may mention that one of the streets in our quarter is called by the significant name of '*Daggers-o*.' Indeed, the names of the French streets, or *rues*, are in many instances exceedingly appropriate. One is called '*Hell-dare*,' from the desperate character of the gambling-houses in it; another, '*Petty Shams*,' from the little tricks of the store-keepers in it to gain custom. Then there are '*Tie-boot*' and '*Laft*,' inhabited chiefly by shoe-makers and tailors. The street of the most fashionable shops is justly denominated '*De la Paie*,' ('*parce qu'on y paie le double pour toute chose*,' said my informant.) while, as a contrast, we have the '*Rue de Savers*,' in a more economical part of the city.

'The cookery of France has long been the boast of its inhabitants, and the puzzle of strangers. Sidney Smith said of Lord Brougham that he could not take tea without a stratagem; I may say of myself, that I cannot take



dinner without a mystery: there is a whole circulating library of them in every dish. However, I have not as yet, *to my knowledge*, eaten a frog, though I would not swear to being guiltless of the consumption of sundry cats and rats. Only yesterday I found the tip of the tail of some unknown animal — literally a tail of mystery — in one of our *table d'hôte* dishes. The practice of commencing dinner with soup, confined among us to the codfish-aristocracy, is here universal; and the poorer classes, rather than go without this national dish, sometimes absolutely make it of old shoes! But the distress among the lower orders here is such as a free-born American can have no idea of. In times of scarcity they are positively driven to consume their bed-clothes; in allusion to which circumstance, the French cooks, with their characteristic levity, have invented a dish called '*blankets of wool*.' The Parisians are very fond of ducks, (*canards*.) A particular species much in demand are called *Canards du Constitutionnel*, or 'constitutional ducks,' from their wholesomeness. I have been pleased to learn that P. T. Barnum, Esq., in his capacity of Agricultural Society President, has made arrangements for naturalizing this valuable breed in America.

'As a Frenchman always begins his dinner with soup, so he always ends it with salad. There are several kinds of this esculent in use; the best is called '*Lay-too*,' because it makes its appearance at that stage of the meal when the eater requires to 'lay to,' or rest, after his prandiatory exertions.

'The duties of my responsible position leave me, as you may suppose, little time for mere amusement. But I was induced the other day to accompany Mr. Benson to a sort of out-of-town hotel, whither the fashionables are accustomed to resort. It is called '*Mad-rid*,' from the frantic style of equestrianism in vogue among its frequenters. There I saw many of the first leaders of ton in Paris, female as well as male; '*grand dams*,' Benson called them, which, however, in French does not mean *grandmothers*, but *great ladies*. The Baroness of Clichy, the Princess Mogador, and many other women of rank, were pointed out to me. The equipages of these children of luxury were superb; their dress and manners most elegant; but it was painful to observe that they had not



been unscathed by the demoralizing influence prevalent in feudal countries: some of them actually smoked cigars! It rejoiced me greatly to remark, among other celebrities present, the resident reporter of the '*Sewer*.' such an incident was truly gratifying, as a proof that men like ourselves find their proper place here, and meet with a due acknowledgment of their merits.

'The same evening we attended a splendid ball, in a very beautiful garden. These balls are called '*Mabille*,' from the French *s'habiller*, 'to dress one's self,' as being emphatically *the* dress-balls. The students and literary men of Paris frequent them, but they have somewhat fallen off of late, and the society is not quite equal to that of the *Mad-rid*. Benson told me that the lady portion of the visitors were '*Low-rates*,' or second rates, as compared with the '*grand dams*,' above mentioned.

'The post is waiting, and I must close in haste.

'Yours ever,

CRANBERRY FUSTER.

*Spirit of the Times.*

Take notice, the locality and date of this epistle  
Are, 9th of April, Saturday, the quiet town of Bristol.

DEAR "*SPIRIT*." — Though 'tis difficult for one aright to pitch a lay who's been imbedded seven days in Tom Carlyle and Michelet, with some excursions Coleridge-ward (there's *kanl* enough all round me,) and other philosophic trips, sufficient to confound me. (I also mention these pursuits by way of an apology for boring you with anything approaching to theology.) I'm tempted irresistibly for half an hour to toss over all musings of historian, polemic, and philosopher, and spin you off a yarn in rhyme, or something that will stand for 't; so God save our militiamen and long live General Sandford! First, then, Election Day has passed, and all is very quiet; Rhode Islanders are not, *just now*, the boys to raise a riot; their dialect rhymes *lor* and *Dorr*, and therefore to sustain law they've voted out the "*Algerines*,"



and voted in the Maine Law. So every man must brew himself, and only fill his own jug; just sell a quart of cider here and they'll give *you* the stone jug. Thank Heaven, they can't yet confiscate your private pocket-pistol! They're not yet so uncivilized in this 'ere town of Bristol. And next your correspondent grieves that, though discreet and quiet, he has had but little chance to judge of Bristolese society; for having been a fortnight here, and more, as he's a sinner, there's not a *human* in the place has asked him out to dinner; whereby (the Maine Law's no excuse; that shan't go down now, shall it?) he conceived imperfect notions of Rhode-Island hospitality; because, without the slightest dread of using a misnomer, we call ourselves "pum sumpkins" — at least when we at home are. (You see I use a figure which is common and convenient; to all such *literal* liberties I trust you will be lenient. In all the realms of verbal fun I don't know such a path as is to worn out witlings opened by this popular metathesis. As in a farce the dramatist is safe to raise a roar if he can put a player's heels where was his head before, so if you just *trip up a phrase* and interchange first letters, you frequently appear to be as witty as your betters. Nay, sometimes it so happens you the meaning *don't* confound, but get thereby a truer sense, as well as newer sound; for instance, our young folks of old were wont to be *romantic*, but Young America is now decidedly *more antic*.) We felt ourselves much slighted (to return from this digression) to think that all our sojourn here made not the least impression, and were extremely gratified when some folks of the "Upper Ten" of the region round about invited us to supper. To some of the inhabitants we greatly longed to speak, who often to our mind recalled four words of ancient Greek: *baia men alla rhoda*, which in England I suppose is, *there aren't many girls about, but those that are, are roses* — a word which coming just in time forbids me to disclose a scintilla of our doings there, because they were *sub rosa*. I therefore drop the curtain with this only intimation — *we hadn't much Maine liquor-law in force on that plantation*.

We're coming back to Gotham soon, intending to go thence on to Philadelphia possibly; meanwhile adieu,

CARL BENSON.



Bedford, L. I., June 10, 1853.

*Dear "Spirit."* — It is always flattering to a man's vanity to be missed. Your readers and contributors seem to have accepted the *Parisian Correspondence* as a fixed fact, and a desirable item; so much so that some public spirited tourists have volunteered to fill the gap. May they stay there till I go back (that's not wishing you any harm, is it, friend Trumper?) and longer too. The more the merrier — and the better cheer, too. We shall falsify half the adage.

But, do you know, if these gentlemen hadn't come to the rescue so handsomely, I might have been tempted to carry out an idea which occurred to me in looking over some of the letters I received last month from t'other side the pond; which was, *to go on with a Parisian Correspondence all the same*, though bodily resident on Rhode Island or Long Island, or some of the other islands. Suppose, for instance, we had taken this extract from a single epistle: —

"There is a very tedious drama at the *Porte St. Martin*. Even Mellingue can't make it interesting. The subject a feud between the St. Pols and Armagnacs; the scenery and costumes, and Mdlle. Lucie's legs, keep it going.

"*'Philiberte,'* a three act comedy in verse by Emile Augier, is having a run at the *Gymnase*, very well acted of course, the sentiment a little too fine drawn.

"*'La Malaria,'* by the Marquis Delannoy, was withdrawn from the *Francais* for a few nights by superior orders, being thought too trifling for the first French theatre — at least that was the ostensible reason. It has been restored. The subject, from Dante's *Inferno*, is prettily treated; a jealous Italian shuts up his wife in the Maremma, and not finding the climate expeditious enough, dispatches her with a poisoned bouquet. Brohan, as the heroine, was charming.

"Ponsard's *'L'honneur et l'argent,'* runs finely at the *Odeon*. They make money there with the pieces refused at the *Francais*. Two or three nights ago some gay youths came down from the Boulevards with four post-horses and applauded vehemently. Probably they were more pleased with their own wit than the author's.



"The *Italian Opera* has picked up. Mme. Lagrange and Rossi have acquitted themselves satisfactorily and Cruvelli, in 'Linda,' made a great hit in the mad-scene the other night. Fiorentino, of the 'Constitutionnel,' says it was one of the few sensations worth remembering. Gardoni, the sweetest tenor we have heard since Mario, sang here at concerts on his way from St. Petersburg to London. Tamburini, who has nothing left but the name, sang, or was supposed to sing, with him.

"There is a new opera *Comique* by Thomas. A chorus of Pifferari, and a tarentella by Ugalde, are pretty. It fell rather flat; the libretto (by Leuven) was hissed."

There! I think half a dozen such extracts, some for the other theatres, some for sporting matters, some for things in general, would have made up a plausible-looking letter, quite enough to deceive the public. Poor public! how it is deceived, for all its shrewdness, especially in these outside matters. I noticed a little instance the other day, and had a quiet laugh over it. One of our Monthlies publishes an article on "Life in Paris," adorned (the term is used for want of a better) with bad copies on a reduced scale from the *Tableau de Paris*, an illustrated work brought out in Paris last year, *itself* a copy from Gavarni and various sources. Thereupon the discriminating editor of a daily observes that "these cuts have a Punch-like comicality which speaks well for the progress of American [!] art." Possibly, however, this was meant for a joke. It is charitable to suppose so. The daily in question is much given to jokes — of a peculiar sort. Very lately it published a deliberate misstatement about one literary man, just for the chances of involving him in a quarrel with another literary man, and so getting up a nice little bit of mischief. What a pity that such benevolent intentions should ever be disappointed! Doubtless this was a joke too, though your correspondent is too dull to see the wit of it. *He* thinks that there is some palliation for the blunders of ignorance, but no excuse for the fabrications of malice. *Query*, does advocating the Maine Law give a man indulgence in any amount of falsehood? Is that an article in the new scheme of Socialist morality?

But your correspondent is too honest to mystify or try to mystify anybody, and will not pretend to be where



he is not. Three months hence he may be telling you how things really are in the metropolis of pleasure meanwhile he submits a question or two on equine matters. \* \* \* \* \*

Wonder if there is any law, statute, or ordinance, in our good city, against using *condemned racers* for cart horses, and if there be such, whether it is any body's business to put it in force. Let me relate, without coloring or exaggeration, a little scene, which as it providentially terminated in no catastrophe, is rather amusing than otherwise to think of, though it might have ended in a sad ditty, anything but a *carmen triumphale*.

Last month your correspondent had occasion to worship a deity to whom Gothamites are wont at that time of year to pay duty and sacrifice. I don't know who was his exact counterpart or prototype in classic mythology, probably *Terminus* — at any rate, if I am wrong, the erudite editor of the "Tribune" can doubtless set me right. In plain English, I had some furniture to move, and as the articles were valuable and the route somewhat complicated, I got upon the cart myself along with them for better supervision of their transport. By the time we were well into the crowd of Broadway, it became evident that our propelling power had more energy and love of progress about him than was perfectly consistent either with the comfort of the moveables or the safety of the public generally. On inquiring of my Automedon the reason of proceedings so at variance with the legitimate habits of the common domestic cart-horse, he replied, "that this horse had been a good runner and won two scrub races on Long Island; had then been sold to a lady, who couldn't make anything of him, (exceedingly likely) and thus arrived at his present estate." He added the pleasing information that he himself was only the temporary driver of the cart, the owner having been capsized the day previous with considerable personal damage.

I have followed some hunts, and *half* a steeple-chase, and been in a few tight places on the road, not to speak of runaways, but I never really knew what it was to be afraid of a horse till that day. Sometimes our animal would start off at full trot, tearing his load along as if it were a skeleton wagon, and rushing into the very jaws of an omnibus. Then he would give ominous indications



of friskiness about the hind legs. Also, he had learned one branch of his new vocation, namely, to back for the purpose of "dumping" and back he would, on the slightest provocation in the way of check, never heeding whether it was against a curb stone or into a carriage. It was some relief to quit Broadway, but we auspicated our deflection into a side-street by nearly pulverising a light wagon. I added my small forces to the driver's pull, just in time to prevent the frail vehicle from being crushed like a nut-shell.

At length we reached the ferry, where we were to cross. At the nearest corner rose a sumptuous oyster stand embellished with its proprietor. The fiery steed made one effort to rush into the confluent tide of vehicles. His driver hauled frantically against him; he backed like a locomotive reversed, the cart wheels jarred on the curb-stone, and the cart tail impinged on the oyster stand with marked emphasis. There was a cry of men and a crash of falling timber.

"Well," said I to myself, "a man has but one life to live and there's no use of his dying before his time."

So I took a flying leap into the street, and having landed just clear of a team, slid under the nose of another cart-horse and gained a place of safety on the side-walk. I looked back to the scene of concussion, and beheld the oysterman on his reverse sitting amid the fragments of his establishment like Marius among the ruins of Carthage — read *cartage* for this day only.

Some benevolent individuals picked up the overthrown dispenser of bivalves. I had fearful visions of the police making a swoop on us — a pardonable error of apprehension arising from European reminiscences. Then I recollected we were in a free country, and began to dread some ill-usage from the crowd. Fortunately I was so shabbily dressed, and in such a state of dirt generally that the most professed lover of the people could not have suspected me of the crime of aristocracy. Having a chance to recover my presence of mind, I made the carman do what he ought to have done before, get down and stay at his horse's head during the rest of our journey, and so by leading the "high-mettled racer" we reached our destination without having any one's blood or bones on our heads.



Now I take the liberty of very much doubting whether such a brute as this would be permitted to do cart work habitually in the streets of any European city. I may be very unpatriotic and un-American to say so, but it is my opinion, nevertheless.

Yours ever.

*Newport, R. I., July 25, 1853.*

*Dear "Spirit."* — Two little weeks ago, or even a shorter time, Newport, having already undergone the agony of preparation, was enduring that of expectation. The tables showed long rows of empty seats; the corridors echoed to the almost solitary footsteps of the few habitual early-comers. There was no music, and a "plentiful scarcity" of carriages. The very barbers were shaving one another for want of something to do. Even the cottagers, not yet on hospitable thoughts intent, looked slightly blank at the face of a stranger. *Now* the periodical change is nearly accomplished. Rooms are scarcer than people to put in them were a fortnight since. Even those hotels which seemed at last overtaken by retributive justice for their misdeeds, and left desolate of guests, are beginning to fill up. (Here by the way, let me remark with pleasure that our "ancient foggy" house, the old-established family *Bellevue*, has held its own this season, and been doing a good stroke of work in advance of more showy rivals. Its unobtrusive merits are getting to be properly appreciated.) There is much show of equipages, and a nice accompaniment of Germania music to your after-dinner cigar or after-tea chat. The cottages — everything in Newport not a hotel is of course a cottage; they are the only two architectural appellations admitted, and the latter includes equally the four-story mansion, embowered in twenty acres of shrubbery, and the four-room frame building in the middle of the town — the cottages are swept and garnished, and interchanging dinners and "at-homes." As to the lots of pretty women one sees everywhere — excuse me; it is really too serious a subject to talk of.

Yet your correspondent prepares to quit the festive scene without regret, inasmuch as he is going (happy



man to have the choice) from this pleasant place to one still pleasanter. For *ubi bene ibi patria*, which I translate very freely, "the pleasantest place for a man is where his family are." And besides this subjective pleasantness (to speak transcendently) Paris has many objective amenities.

To be sure it is dead. So is all France. The "Courier & Enquirer" determined that some weeks ago. Brandy and salt won't save it — not all the burnt brandy of Louis Napoleon's soldiery, nor all the attic salt of its wits and dramatists. A very remarkable article that was of the "Courier's," with several merits besides its brevity. Much impressed therewith, and having meditated somewhat on the subject, your correspondent has come to a different conclusion. I suppose in this free country one *may* differ in opinion even from an editor.

Surely he would be a bold man who should affirm that France was financially, or commercially, or manufacturingly dead. (Excuse the last clumsy adverb.) Some important elements of national life these. Militarily dead she most assuredly is not, and seems likely to show the Czar as much before long. Nor can she well be called defunct in a literary point of view, though the temptation of pecuniary profit and other reasons have drawn most of her talent in two special directions, to fictitious and dramatic literature.

But the death asserted of France is probably a moral one. We have often heard this. French immorality has long been no secret to the French themselves, even to the very men among them who have done their best or worst to swell the tide — the politicians, the novelists, the dramatists, the artists. Couture's famous picture, "The Banquet during the Decline of the Roman Empire," owed its reputation not more to its artistic merits (possibly a little over-rated) than to the sentiment it conveyed — its moral applicability to the existing state of society. There have been several morals drawn from that picture. One of our most popular writers has applied it to our own Gothamite Upper Ten-dom, that effete and emasculate society which sends out young men one year to fight the country's battles in Mexico, and another year to drive carts and keep stores in California, and



every year to marry and bring up families on incomes that would condemn a European exquisite to selfish old-bachelor-hood. But there is no accounting for comparisons any more than for tastes. Digression apart, French immorality is not to be denied or glossed over, but neither is it a thing of yesterday. The French are an immoral people now, *and they always were*. What killed their last chance was something that happened some time ago — the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. That was what fixed their flint for them. The reign of Louis XIV. was one of France's great eras. No one would have said then she was dead or dying; certainly not the Pope or the German Emperor, most assuredly not that greatest of modern kings, William III. of England, who wore out his mighty heart contending against her. *Are the French people more immoral, or less moral, whichever way you like to phrase it, under Napoleon III. than they were under Louis XIV.?* I say no! no! a thousand times no!

As to religion, the French don't persecute now as they did in Louis XIV.'s time; and, with all due deference to the high ecclesiastical authorities on the other side, I opine that toleration, even when the result of indifference, is a great step in advance of persecution. So on the whole we conclude that France isn't dead yet.

At the same time, Paris may well be the moral death of many who go there. Especially dangerous is it for those youth whose innocence is the result of ignorance and Mrs. Grundy, rather than principle and reason. Such are marvellously prone to go to the devil with four post horses. Young America in Paris suffers much from two alarming maladies, laziness and lorettes. Only let us do our countrymen justice in one respect. They are not in the habit — even the youngest and spooniest of them — of taking the first *Dame aux Camelias* they meet for a Princess in disguise, albeit it has lately become fashionable to represent them so in print. I fancy that sort of thing has occasionally happened to green Englishmen — bagmen and the like — and our writers on Paris have adopted this stock incident from the English. Our compatriots take these *ladies* for what they are — which is bad enough; they don't mistake them for real ladies.

There is an old nautical joke against a landsman



that "he has come to sea to wear out his old clothes." It has often seemed to me that the Anglo-Saxons (English as well as ourselves) come similarly to Paris to wear out their bad morals, keeping such good ones as they are supposed to have for home consumption. It is really refreshing to see how a man who has been shown all the ropes of the metropolis of pleasure, perhaps given some of the Gauls a wrinkle or two, comes home, looks prim, talks grave, goes to church, and thanks God that we are not even as those Frenchmen.

The Parisians must have odd ideas of our countrymen from their ordinary outside phases there. I verily believe that the only product of American *civilization* permanently translated into Paris is the noble game of poker — *pocare* as they call it in the clubs. The sherry-cobbler has not quite held its ground. One prevalent notion is, that all Americans are immensely rich, like the Russians. And indeed these are the two most money-spending nations among continental travellers; only the Russian is living on his income, and the American frequently treating himself to a bit out of his principal. The English *milord* is almost in the past tense. The present generation of Englishmen mostly go abroad to economize. A very natural accident has increased the reputation of our countrymen in this respect — that of their frequently making purchases from the most fashionable tradesmen, far beyond their own consumption, on account of friends or relatives at home. I knew a lady who used regularly to supply five sisters in New-York with bonnets, and thereby obtained the not altogether desirable renown of spending a fortune in millinery. And it was once my own hap, under somewhat similar circumstances, to run up a bill at Boivin's that astonished the weak mind of a certain small periodical, published I believe in a section of the country where people are not in the habit of wearing gloves.

Now that we have come to the end of our time and paper, what is all this *farrago libelli* about? *Quien sabe?* Let it go. I am so in the habit of writing to the "Spirit" that it has become a sort of necessary excitement; I am afraid writing grows on one, like liquor and tobacco, and other insidious habits. When once safe across the water we will try to send you something better. May we not this time, as too often before,



“Pave with abortive intentions  
[the road to] A place too caloric to name.”

Meanwhile, farewell for a month or so. *Cras ingens iterabimus aequor*. Translate, we sail in the Franklin, July 30th.

Ever yours.

*Chateau Hocquard, Louveciennes, August 22, 1853.*

*Dear “Spirit.”* — Have the goodness to imagine a park of a hundred acres, “be the same more or less,” straggling all over a hill; magnificent old tress and leafy avenues of all sorts; drives and walks, carriage-roads, bridle-paths, and foot-paths; artistically-cut vistas at all the best points of view, giving you miles of prospect over hill and dale, wood and water, disclosing here an aqueduct, there a rail-road bridge, here a little village on the river, there another country-seat on another hill. On the highest ground a jolly old house, with suites of rooms numerous, and cool stone passages, and mysterious closets, and queer glass plates about the door-knobs that throw startling reflections on your privacy, making you turn round at times, under the impression that your door has been left open, or that some stranger has popped into your room; and old pictures (bad enough, too, some of them,) and books of the “no-gentleman’s-library-should-be-without” kind; the whole establishment having been left uninhabited just long enough to give it a little wildness, without letting it go to ruin. Such is Chateau Hocquard, about twelve miles from Paris, where your correspondent is at home for the season.

At home? Can a man *begin* to be at home anywhere out of his native country? There was a time when I thought not, but *nos mutamur*, however the *tempora* may be. At any rate, we are not alone in the change. No one who has not intimately associated with those Americans who may be conveniently grouped under the term “the travelled class,” can fully appreciate the extent of their absentee propensities. You may often hear it laid down as an axiom, both by them and by foreigners (quick enough to observe such manifestations), that no American, after having lived abroad, comes home to live from choice,



his return being due either to business engagements — in other words, want of means — or to filial duty and family ties. Somewhat too broad this assertion, but not without a good deal of foundation. And the existence of such a feeling presents a curious social problem.

To be sure there are two solutions which you need not go far to seek. First, that of the American Radical, your real leveller, who hates everybody in any way better off than himself, richer, more educated, more respected; or of the man who makes his living, wholly or partially, by talking "for Buncombe."

"These are bad people; useless people at least, and all useless people in this country are bad. They like to see the masses slaves, and we are all freemen. They like to be idle, and we are all workers. They like luxury, and we are all temperance, frugality, and republican simplicity. They like dissipation and vice, and we are the most moral and virtuous nation under the sun," &c. &c. &c. There is no scarcity of these assertions. You may hear them repeated over and over again, in newspapers, magazines, lectures, addresses. Probably the *reasoner* winds up by saying "they are a set of snobs," a term of opprobrium which such persons are very fond of using, just as "gemmen of color," when angry with a man, are apt to call him "you nigger!"

The European Conservative who has observed the peculiarity in question, is equally dogmatic in *his* way of accounting for it. "America is no country for gentlemen, and therefore gentlemen don't like to live in it. Every one is at work making money. Those who have made it, or their children, do not know how to spend it, except in animal gratification or ostentation of upholstery. The man of elegant leisure finds no like-minded men. But further, he is subject to a galling social tyranny which obliges him either to shun all notice, or to flatter *his* tyrant, the mob. He dares not live differently, or spend his money differently, from his neighbors. He goes abroad not only to gratify refined tastes, but also to enjoy social freedom."

That these solutions contradict each other is evident. But this is saying very little of them. When brought into contact they severally confute themselves, and at



the same time, paradoxical as it seems, mutually confirm the prejudices of those who propose them.

For instance, the American radical sees that there are eminent men in his country not engaged in business or politics, and also men of wealth and leisure. The relative talents of the former, the relative wealth and leisure of the latter, he may not properly estimate, but the broad fact of their existence is sufficiently obvious. Being convinced, therefore, by actual observation, that the European's position is in some sense and degree untrue, he concludes that it is untrue altogether; that there is nothing in the country of which a gentleman has any right to complain, and that he who does practically complain by living or wishing to live abroad, is a worthless and unrepugnant character.

On the other hand, the European meets with Americans temporarily or permanently resident abroad. He finds them men of elegant tastes and pleasing manners. Very probably his experience of them goes far to remove old prepossessions which he entertained. Nevertheless, he sees all this class indiscriminately denounced, and represented in an odious light by popular writers. Knowing by experience the falsehood and injustice of these attacks, he is the more confirmed in his idea that gentlemen of leisure and refinement have neither occupation, enjoyment, nor liberty, in America, and therefore get out of it in self-defence as soon as they can or dare.

An unprejudiced man (or something as near to that moral phenomenon as can reasonably be supposed to exist) might perhaps say that the truth lay between these extremes, the class of which we speak suffering some real grievances, and at the same time having these grievances exaggerated by foreigners, and being disposed to exaggerate them themselves. But there is also another possible supposition, that the truth, or at least a portion of it, may lie not between the extremes at all, but *outside of the line altogether*; that Americans may live, or wish to live abroad, without any particular aristocratic or anti-democratic prejudices, without losing their patriotism or preference of free institutions.

Nobody doubts that a man who has emigrated to escape absolute starvation, or the effects of political persecution, (say an Irishman or a Hungarian) may retain a



most ardent attachment for his country, although he has run out of it as fast as his legs could carry him, or the billows of ocean bear him, and has no appreciable chance of ever permanently returning to it. This is the extreme case: take another. Many Englishmen and Frenchmen reside among us who continue to prefer the institutions of their own countries, as they show by not claiming American citizenship. These men live in America voluntarily, because they can improve their fortunes and live more comfortably and luxuriously there than at home. Now, if it be indisputable that political freedom (a somewhat vague and sometimes much abused term, which often comes practically to mean *living under a government with a republican form*;) and money-making are the two great and overwhelming motives of human life, then of course there is an end of the application; but if we admit that there may be other inducements quite as legitimate to fix a private individual in his choice of residence, a tolerably wide field is opened at once.

Take health, for instance, one of the greatest blessings in itself, and a necessary foundation for the enjoyment of many others. The climate of many parts of Europe, is, on the whole, more favorable than that of any part of America, as a man very soon finds out, or as the mere use of his eyes will tell him, if he has never tried the experiment himself. The American who returns from those hotbeds of tyranny, dissipation, and wickedness, the European capitals, lands with the bloom of health on his cheek and twenty pounds more flesh on his bones than he had at starting. After being a month or two in our free and virtuous commercial metropolis, he looks thin and yellow and care-worn as ever. The subject is one so entirely unconnected with politics, morals, or religion, that it might be supposed a person could avow the fact, and assign it as a reason for choosing to live on the east side of the Atlantic without thereby incurring any odium or suspicion. No sane being supposes that Victoria has any influence with the Clerk of the weather, or that Louis Napoleon can "do" a decree at the Tuileries for the regulation of the atmosphere, and give a "second warning" to Boreas, or that Frank Pierce has, like Virgil's Augustus, joint empire of the skies with Jupiter. And yet so fanatically and ineptly rampant is



the patriotism of some people, that to hint at the climate of Naples or Paris being better than that of New-York, will be considered a sort of treason. You will hear them talk as if were one's duty to die, or at least be bilious and dyspeptic, under a republic, when you can live and be well under a monarchy.

Again, our city life (and remember we are discussing the motives of a city-living class) is the most hurrying and worrying, and wearing and tearing, in the world. There is as constant fever of excitement. Whenever I go into Wall-street (where, seldom having more than half-a-dozen people to see, and always at least half an hour to see them in, I am not obliged to race like a stray locomotive,) it gives me a most Rip Van Winkle and behind-the-age sensation. Every man and every thing around me seems to say "What are you about here, you idler? What are you doing, walking at the rate of three miles an hour? Wake up, run around, do something and somebody to make money. Go into a bank or a company. Speculate in lots. Corner some hapless individual on fancy stock. Turn up your sleeves and slave, like a free citizen. Get the advantage of somebody, like a conscientious man. Make a few hundred thousand dollars in less than no time, or else fail for half a million, and ruin yourself and a dozen friends, and some hundred strangers." That's what the very stones of Wall-street seem to be saying to me. Very exciting and tempting it is, even to a philosopher. If you ever watched Prince Kantpronouncizname, at Rauchenzubad, gathering in pocketfuls of rouleaus, you couldn't help feeling a momentary wish to try your luck. But of course you wouldn't, for it's wrong to gamble.

It may be that all this restlessness has a magnificent collective result, and makes us a miracle of progress, the admiration and envy of the world, and so forth, but its individual personal results are anything but brilliant or pleasant. A dogged application, which only unbends itself physically in undigesting voracity, and mentally in undigested bombast and rabid invective, is considered the normal state of a citizen. The luxury of leisure and the luxury of mirth are alike condemned. The *desipere in loco* is kicked out of doors, and the possibility of occasional trifling construed into an incapacity for sober thought.



So much for what we have called that part of the case which lies *outside* the line between the two extreme opinions. Not that this branch of the question is exhausted. Several other reasons might be adduced why an American may prefer Europe for a residence without ceasing to have a profound respect for his Excellency the President and all — no, not *all* the Members of Congress; that would be expecting a little too much; but for Congress in its abstract and collective capacity. What we have said, however, may serve for a specimen.

Now let us look at what lies *within* the line, and somewhere between the two extreme points. Is it true, for instance, that a man of leisure can find nothing to do in America, or, on the other hand, that our men of leisure are worthless members of the community?

To say that a gentleman out of business (counting as *business* the three learned professions, public service, and all kinds of mercantile work) can find no amusement in America, is to lay down an exaggerated and incorrect position. A sporting man has large opportunities, and some kinds of sport (as who know better than the "Spirits" and its readers?) are better carried out in our country than in any other. The mere epicureism of life, whether displayed in edibles or potables, or in wearables and upholstery, is highly cultivated in our cities. The tourist, the lover of scenery, the amateur sketcher or landscape painter, have all great advantages.

It must be borne in mind, however, that most of these pursuits and predilections are not of a highly intellectual character. Many of them also are of a class which, though not necessarily vicious or inherently low (Heaven forbid!) have a tendency, *unless tempered by other influences*, to lead into animal excess and irregular habits.

If we qualify the position, and say that a man of literary or scientific, or (with some exceptions) artistic leisure, is apt to find himself out of place in America, it will perhaps not be so very far from the real state of the case.

The want of libraries, galleries, and similar appliances, is a fact so obvious that it requires only to be stated; to enlarge on it would be superfluous. But a more serious want, one of constant and daily recurrence, is that of like-minded associates. Books may be imported,



but men cannot be made to order. Most persons, however attached to their favorite pursuits, go on in them all the better for sympathy. The veriest London alderman would not fully enjoy himself alone at a banquet. The most complete specimen of a New-York ditto would be comparatively honest if he had no compeers to aid and encourage him in his "realizing" propensities. The amateur has an ever present sense of discouraging influences about him, which all his enthusiasm cannot cause him to forget. Whatever has not a practical, *i. e.* money-making or vote-making result, is looked upon with contempt or suspicion. That a gentleman should study music without teaching it, or architecture without being a professional architect, is a perfectly natural thing in Germany or Italy. With us it would be deemed only an excuse for doing nothing. Or that he should take up his residence at a German University for the purpose, say, of acquiring an Oriental language, would be thought rather a praiseworthy step than otherwise in France or England. Among us I am afraid it would be regarded in most quarters with stupid wonder or more stupid ridicule. In a word, the man who is not making or trying to make money, has a certain want of position and influence. There is a prestige against him. Political ambition is only an *apparent* exception, for that has an ominous squint towards "the spoils."

Now most men, and particularly most Americans, are more or less many sided. Almost every person has more than one favorite pursuit or tendency. We do not generally find people in real life like the characters in Miss Burney's novels, or the "Fine Old English" style of comedy, mere concrete representations of a single passion. A man may like pure mathematics and also be a disciple of Izaak Walton. He may have a natural inclination to philology and also a weakness for horse-flesh. He may feel a strong interest in art, conjointly with a correct appreciation of good suppers. And here it is that our utilitarian standard tells both ways against the man of leisure. He has an intellectual taste leading him to the pursuit of some study. He has also a physical taste leading him to the pursuit of some favorite recreation. He finds associates more readily, and consequently more encouragement in the latter than in the former. He



sees that indulgence in the former diminishes his conventional respectability as much as indulgence in the latter. He is repulsed from intellectual society (or what does duty for such) and invited into purely physical society.

Of course there is one ready and convenient answer to all this. The gentlest form of it is the position that, ours being a new country, every man in it is bound to work and develop the country's resources. *Once* this assertion may have been correct enough, but surely at present a stranger standing in our streets, and looking around him, might well ask, "If this nation, with the second commerce in the world, with its miles of shipping and thousands of leagues of railroad, its cities of half a million population, and its citizens of ten millions fortune — if this country is not sufficiently developed *now* to attend to the ornaments and graces of life, when *will* it be?" But the more usual and violent form of stating the answer is, that idle men ought to be made Pariahs, for the genius of our country's institutions demands that idleness should be held disreputable. This is good popular doctrine, and a stock sentiment with such people as are in the habit of lecturing at fifty cents a head.

Here, in the first place, great injustice is done to the class attacked, by the use of the word *idle*, this depreciating term being applied, not to want of occupation but to want of *paid* occupation; not to the non-study of any profession, art, science, or branch of literature, but to the non-*practice* of it for pecuniary remuneration.

Probably no one but a fanatic, or a barbarian, would contend that it is in any way wrong or dishonorable to be an artist, or author, or teacher, (I abstain designedly from the word *professor*; it has become too low since craniologists and mesmerizers, and all sorts of humbugs, have taken it up,) or *savant*, provided one does so professionally, and makes an income by such pursuit. Now suppose that having the income beforehand from independent sources, a man chooses to *give* his services to the public, or his friends, does that make his position less respectable? If so, then we measure the art or science by the money, the higher standard by the lower; genius, talent, learning, are, to use Goethe's illustration, not the



high and heavenly goddesses, but the convenient cows that keep us in cheese and butter. I should take it just the other way, and say that the author, artist, or scientific man, works for money only incidentally, because he must live, and the laborer is worthy of his hire; that the pecuniary proceeds of his labor are his means and not his end; and that if he acts on a different principle, making the acquisition of a fortune his end, then, however successful in securing that object he may be, he is not imbued with the true spirit of a liberal profession.

But, it may be said, we put the case too favorably for our side. Many, nay most men of leisure, are not amateurs of any art or science, or literary men in the sense of writing and publishing literary men. Their only occupation is amusement; they are literally idle. We will admit this, and moreover put aside the possibility of their doing good as Mæcenases or patrons, though something might be said on this point. Take a gentlemanly and accomplished man, who has nothing to do but discharge his family and social duties, and amuse himself. It is possible that such a one may be in some sense his own enemy, that he loses a great resource and the most reliable means of real amusement, by having no pet employment; but if his life is correct and pure, if he pays his debts and wrongs no one, what is there *disgraceful* in his mode of existence? Oh, says the objector, idle people have a proclivity to vice. Perhaps there comes up a quotation from the child's classic about Satan finding some mischief, &c.

No doubt leisure has its temptations. Arthur Helps expresses this very well when he says that "hard work is a great police agent." Possibly, however, the normal state of man may not be that of constant police supervision. And there arises a small query on the other side not altogether unworthy consideration. *Has business no temptations?* Is the lawyer never tempted to "make the worse appear the better reason," to foster litigation, to widen breaches that might easily be repaired? Is the merchant never tempted to something very like licensed gambling, or what may be legal honesty, but looks very like moral dishonesty? \* Are the terms *politician* and

\* "An American citizen never steals; he only gets the advantage."  
— Sam Slick.



*man of principle* absolutely and indisputably synonymous? Nay, that great moral teacher, the daily editor, is his course entirely free from snares and perils? Does he walk through the world like an innocent Little Red Ridinghood, *without* any wolf in the path? Compare the idleness of twenty Master Silkes and Mrs. Potiphars, and the industry of the *New-York* (reader to fill the blank as he pleases), with reference to the respective amount of harm they do the community. Calculate the extent of damage done by a single commercial explosion.

It may be said, "but these are exceptional cases; it is not the inherent quality — the *differentia*, as logicians call it — of the lawyer to pettifog, of the merchant to fail, of the editor to deceive and slander." Very well, then I say on my side, it is not the *differentia* of the gentleman to be disorderly, or dissipated, or profligate; nay, it is part of his character *not* to be so. There is a distich in Ovid (much quoted by the "North American Review," and occasionally mis-cited by the Honorable Horace Mann,) how "learning the liberal arts softens the manners and prevents men from being brutal," which deserves more attention than it always receives among us.

Chateau Hocquard, October 6, 1853.

*Dear "Spirit."* — In the present dearth of news — that is of news suited to your columns, allow me to take up the thread of sundry observations you were indulgent enough to make room for in your paper of the 10th ult. Were I writing to a political journal now, nothing would be easier than to spin a long yarn every week about the great things that *are to happen*; what the Russian Emperor is going to do, and what the French ditto is going to do, and what Lord Aberdeen *isn't* going to do, and so forth. Then if none of all this comes to pass, it can be contradicted by next packet; which furnishes an endless supply of material, a most convenient Penelope's web. But now that the sporting world is waiting for next week, and the theatrical for next month, what can we do but finish our speculations?

There was one (real or assumed) cause of absenteeism at which our former investigation stopped short — "social tyranny." Is there such a thing in America more



than in some other countries? and if so, in what does it consist? You will often hear very loose assertions on this point. Not only foreigners, but some Americans, will tell you, "there is more *political* liberty in America, but more *social* liberty in Europe." Many of the persons who promulgate this formula, do so with a strange misapplication of terms;

"License they mean when they cry liberty."

Sometimes a man will praise Paris for its *social liberty* because his position as a stranger allows him to do things not merely which an Anglo-Saxon man could not do in an Anglo-Saxon country, but what he would not do himself if he were a Frenchman in good society. Thus on returning from his Continental tour he finds that he cannot go to the theatre on Sunday night and take his mistress with him; forthwith he d—ns the country, and declares that American freedom is all humbug, and France is the place for liberty after all.

I once heard a Frenchman in London dispose of English liberty by a similar process. A slightly immoral play of Victor Hugo's had been refused a license at the St. James' Theatre. "*On dit que ceci est un pays libre,*" exclaimed the indignant Gaul, "*et on nous defend de voir Ruy Blas!*" (Call this a free country, indeed, where they won't let us see Ruy Blas played!)

[It is not unworthy of remark that such persons usually object to England on the score of social slavery quite as much as to America.]

Nevertheless there is a certain amount of truth in the formula. It would be a gross injustice to our countrymen abroad to say that they *all* understand liberty to consist in vice and impiety. An American often *does* really find abroad a social independence which he never enjoyed at home.

But may not this be owing to the fact that he is a stranger in the land, has no social duties, no Mrs. Grundy, nobody to think of but himself and such of his family as may be with him?

This has *something* to do with it doubtless, but it does not begin to cover the whole ground. For let him go to some place in America (be it large city or country town) where he is equally a stranger in everything but language; he will not be his own master in the same way.



One reason is our national curiosity. Not only will your genuine Democratic citizen do twice as much work for himself as any other living man, but he will insist on helping to do his neighbor's business, or at least hearing what that business is. Another cause is the spirit of envy, a feeling often stimulated to such jealousy that it finds fault with all difference from its own standard, as if *difference* must imply an assumption of superiority. Not but that a man may indulge in his peculiar or exclusive tastes at home, if he shuns doing anything, or saying anything, or having anything, that can attract attention out of doors. But then what becomes of his glorious privileges as a citizen of a free country? Such a man might live quite comfortably under the present French government — perhaps even under the Austrian. Let him chance to express an independent opinion on some social question and see how soon he will be in a tight place. An opponent of the Maine Law in some parts of New-England is a case in point, and other illustrations will occur to your readers.

To be sure this does not often happen. It is more usual that one of the class in question becomes demonstrative in his external tastes. Then, for doing exactly what he would naturally do in any other civilized country — for doing what cannot by any legitimate use of words be taxed as the violation of any moral code, he shall subject himself to unpopularity, which only stops short of personal violence. It would not be saying too much to affirm that those persons in America who know best how to spend money\* are the very ones whose expenditure raises the most outcry and incurs the most odium. There is no cheaper way of getting popularity than by decrying a certain class which has its place and value in all civilized communities just as the butterfly has *its* place in the animal kingdom, though a less useful animal than the pig. Take notice, it is not on account of their wealth, nor are they the richest individuals of the community. The self-made and vulgar millionaire is indeed obnoxious to that envy which attacks superiority in *any*

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\* If any captious reader should be inclined to take up this sentence on the ground that the noblest and best use of wealth is in works of charity and mercy, he will please recollect that we are not talking of *giving* money but of *spending* it. The distinction is obvious.



shape, but at the same time his success is in some respects flattering to all those who resemble him in their tastes and pursuits. But he who makes any virtual pretension to superior refinement, whether it consists in recondite intellectual attainments or in more formal accomplishments and graces, claims that which essentially pre-supposes a certain education and antecedents more or less peculiar, and therefore incurs the terrible charge of aristocracy.

Though the above remarks are sufficiently clear to any one who will take the trouble to reflect on them, yet as they might, if left alone, incur the charge of vagueness from a hasty reader, we will develop them into some particulars.

There is a cry against the class in question for *anti-Americanism*, adopting *foreign* habits, paying too much deference to *foreign* opinions, making too much of *foreigners*, &c. Now I can understand the consistency of charging this as a crime on any person, or persons, in some countries of the world — England for instance. (The *consistency*, I say, not the propriety.) But among a people whose boast it is to receive and adopt foreigners from every land under Heaven, a people in whose elections the foreign population forms one of the most important elements — that it should *there* be made a serious charge against any set of individuals to have adopted some trivial foreign fashion, does seem to me the height of inconsistency. Unless it can be shown that a bonnet is of more importance than a religion, the class that attaches an undue interest to trifles, is not the one commonly supposed to. In truth, the persons under discussion are in most points intensely American — ask any intelligent foreigner if they are not — with most of the prominent merits and faults of their countrymen. The only marked difference predicable of them, as a class, is their want of interest in politics, a deficiency surely pardonable when we consider how overstocked the politician market always is. If they were less American in some things, if they had more of the Englishman's pride and self respect for instance, they would not be so easily chased out of the country by anything said or printed about them, because they would not care a monosyllable for anything that was said or printed; at the same time they would probably be even more unpopular than they are.



Let us go still further into particulars. Within a few years there has been a great row made about *liveries*. To hear some writers you would think that this was the crying sin of our cities, the most deadly of innovations and corruptions, that our morals and liberties were seriously endangered by the spectacle of a few dozen Irish servants in Broadway wearing top-boots or breeches, or both.

Why so? A livery is *unrepublican*, says the popularity hunter, because it is a badge of servitude. Now, in the first place, I deny that a livery necessarily is a badge of servitude. Probably, friend "Spirit," you have seen a gentleman rider in colors. At any rate, we have all seen a man driving his own horse, or the horse he entered, in livery. Yes, *in livery*, and if the Jockey Club rules were strictly enforced it would *always* be the case, but those rules, as you very justly remarked not long ago, are continually violated. I wonder if Gil. Crane, or Ward, ever thought they were assuming a "badge of servitude" by riding and driving in that green velvet dress which (unless your correspondent is greatly mistaken) is as much a part of Mac's regular appurtenances as his saddle and bridle.

But we will make the other side a present of this argument. Let us suppose there is a radical difference between a jockey's costume and a groom's, which makes it impossible to compare the two. Let us admit that a livery necessarily shows the bearer of it to be a servant. What reason is there that a servant should be ashamed to wear a badge of his business any more than a soldier, or a sailor, or a parson of *his*? None at all, *unless he is ashamed of being a servant*. And this idea will be found to run through the whole question. Every argument against liveries is by a perfectly legitimate extension, an argument against the whole institution of domestic service. This is the ground which our *livery-mastiges* ought in consistency to take. I should like to see them come out on this "platform," and how their exertions would be received by the objects of their solicitude.

"But the poor man is *oppressed* by being *forced* to wear a livery." Was there ever a greater bit of "Buncombe?" It may do for people "way up country," but surely no inhabitant of a city can read it without a smile. An American gentleman *forcing* his servant to do *anything*!



Why, in nine cases out of ten the servant is the more independent man of the two. A good servant can find a place more readily than an employer can find a good servant. This is true to some extent *even in London and Paris*; it is true *without qualification* of all our cities. And in every case it may be affirmed the groom or coachman would rather wear a neat livery than not, *unless he has been insulted on some occasion by some of those gentry who are so anxious to take care of his liberties for him.*

In the next place, what harm does a livery do the public? Is there any indecency or impropriety about it, as there would be for instance in a woman wearing a man's clothes, or *vice versa*? Is it any inconvenience to those who come in contact with it, like a horseman in a crowd of pedestrians, or a smoker in a public place frequented by both sexes? What is the use and purport of it? First, it enables you to distinguish your own servant in a promiscuous crowd, and in this respect it is really a great convenience, and the larger our cities become the more will liveries be needed on this account. But this is not the only intention of it. It serves a purpose of display and luxury. Yes, it does. It helps to make an equipage complete.\* A carriage looks better when its driver is in proper costume, just as a race looks better when the jockies are. Well, is this a crime against republicanism? Are we to have sumptuary laws? No doubt fitness and elegance are a stench in the nostrils of some persons. It was recently made a serious charge against the President of the United States, that his coachman and footman were dressed *alike*. If a man prefers incongruity, if he would rather wear one boot and one shoe than a pair of either article, by all means let him be free to follow his tastes, but let him also have common charity enough to allow those who have juster notions of symmetry to follow their tastes. The true reason of his outcry is often a mean feeling of envy against those who are better off than himself, and have more refined ideas.

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\* I fancy that if we go very deep into the philosophic signification of a livery, it betokens a *professional connection with horses and equipages*. The European in-door liveried servants were originally out-door servants, who accompanied the carriage on foot, whence their name *footmen*. So you see this discussion comes *strictly* within the special province of the "Spirit."



In short, the whole question ought to lie between the servant and his employer. If I choose to give Patrick or Sambo a livery, and he chooses to wear it, (as he most probably will, being a pecuniary gainer thereby to the extent of much wear and tear of his own clothes saved,) no other person has anything to do with the matter. The man who insults Pat for wearing a livery infringes on his social freedom. The man who denounces or misrepresents me for having a servant in livery infringes on my social freedom — in a small thing, you will say, but small things often lead to great. If any man or men may prescribe what dress my servants shall or shall not wear, they may by a perfectly legitimate extension of the principle, proceed to regulate my wife's dress or my own, the sort of carriage I shall drive in, or the number of rooms I shall have in my house.

However, I feel some hope that this popular delusion may be "reformed indifferently." Now that a Democratic President has appointed to an important post abroad a gentleman who was always noted for sporting neat and correct liveries, the practice may perhaps be admitted as not necessarily destructive of the Constitution.

Let us pass to another point. Perfect social equality can only be attained approximately in any country. There will always be some classes with more influence and license than others, if not by law, then by custom or possession somehow, in a greater or less degree. Now it makes some difference to a gentleman *who the privileged classes are*. For instance, other things being equal, he would rather have to ask a favor of a prince than of an innkeeper. I say *other things being equal*, not meaning to deny that some innkeepers are perfect gentlemen, and some princes quite the reverse; but the rule is a safe general one, though liable to exceptions. In many parts of America, however, a hotel-keeper is more privileged than a titled personage in any part of Western Europe: it is more dangerous to offend him, he can offend others with more impunity. Let me illustrate this by contrast. Every traveller has remarked that English hotels are generally bad and always dear. The tradition of "war prices" is kept up at them, and many other traditions and fictions. Finally the nuisance, which had long been too much for strangers, became too much for the natives;



A. B. C., X. Y. Z., and other combinations and permutations of the alphabet, inundated the "Times" with their communications; the evil has been thoroughly exposed and brought before the public, the first step, and a very necessary one, towards its abatement. The spark that kindled the flame was the letter of the first A. B. C. to the "Times." Now suppose the landlord shown up by A. B. C. aforesaid had written to the "Times" demanding the name of the person who had dared to find fault with his establishment, that the editor through fear or favor had given the name up, that the landlord had thereupon hired one London and one country paper to abuse A. B. C. in every variety of Billingsgate *pour encourager les autres*, which had the effect of frightening other victims into silence for some time, until matters came to a crisis in a pitched battle with deadly weapons between the guests and servants of the hotel. Put this case to an Englishman, and he would tell you that *every stage of it* was impossible, yet the precise counterpart happened in America a very few years ago ; *pars fuit* your correspondent.

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## GRATTAN'S CIVILIZED AMERICA.

Porter's Spirit, May 1859.

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IT is a singular problem in the literature of the age, that no Englishman has ever written a really good book about America. Very clever and tolerably accurate newspaper and magazine articles have been produced from time to time on isolated questions, but all larger and more serious works have proved fearfully inadequate. The singularity consists in the contrast which this deficiency presents to the superiority, everywhere else obvious, in the English treatment of political and social questions. The best French writers are very clever, very neat, very ingenious; but they all lack the breadth and massiveness of the Briton, and all seem incapable of thoroughly comprehending at once the theory and the facts of a question. But when we come to American affairs, we find that the French have written some very bad books, no doubt, but also some very good ones; De Tocqueville's is a case in point.



The suggestion that no English celebrity, equal in his line to De Tocqueville, has handled the subject, would not be a sufficient solution. Oscar Commettant is no very distinguished name in French literature, yet his sketches show a fairer and truer appreciation of our people than can be found in the pages of very celebrated English writers. How comes it that the Frenchman, with all the disadvantages of a different race, language, and (generally) religion, can hit so much nearer the mark than the member of a kindred stock?

Probably it is this very resemblance which makes a great part of the difficulty. The English traveller is predisposed by these great similarities to expect many other similarities in smaller things, which do not exist; and when, instead of these, he finds marked differences, a certain feeling of disappointment and annoyance results, which interferes with his judgment on more important matters. When he goes on the Continent, he is prepared to find everything different from what it is at home; when he comes to America, he is not prepared to find anything different, except the government. Now, it is precisely in things much alike in general, that small differences of detail make the strongest impression, because they are unseen from a distance, and unsuspected beforehand. To take an extreme case: the English Universities are very like each other, and very unlike all other academic institutions. The American Colleges, too, are very much alike among themselves. Yet, a man going from Oxford to Cambridge, or from Yale to Harvard, is more struck, at first, by the difference than by the resemblance, because he had no clear expectation of any differences existing.

If it seem unphilosophical to attach so much weight to trifling differences of habits and manners, we must recollect that a great part of man's daily life is made up of these trifles. There are differences, however, much more important than the hours of dining, or the stuff of which one's "continuations" are made, or the names by which these necessary articles of dress are called — marked differences of moral association and feeling. Thus, the present discussion in England respecting marriage with a deceased wife's sister, is extremely curious to an American — curious because it is quite impossible for



him, by any ordinary effort of imagination, to put himself in the place of one of the parties to it.\*

Of course, we do not pretend to say that this covers the whole ground. There is another fertile source of disappointment, of which we shall have occasion to speak farther on. There are impediments on our side as well. Thus, it is extremely probable that our over-sensitive-ness has prevented some of the men best qualified to write about us from doing so, for fear of giving offence to a people whom they really like, yet about whom their English frankness might oblige them to tell some unpleasant truths. In the case of one very eminent author, we can affirm this to be the fact from our own personal knowledge. While waiting in hope for Buckle's second volume, we, meanwhile, without professing fully to account for, can only deplore this incapacity or fatality, not confined to *Englishmen* alone, but extending to all her Majesty's subjects. Thus, Mr. Grattan is an Irishman; the only consequence of which, so far as we are concerned, is the addition of some peculiar blunders and spites to the blunders and spites of his predecessors.

The first impression which one derives from a perusal of Mr. G.'s book, is its pervading tone of ill-nature and *malus animus*, a set purpose to say disagreeable truths — or the reverse of truths — in the most disagreeable way. This intent is manifest in the earliest pages of his introduction, where, for the comfort of the whole nation, and the especial delectation of "our brethren of the South," he fixes the term *Yankee*, in certainly not its least offensive sense, on the entire people of the United States. It is evident in his dimly veiled or openly undisguised disparagement of every public character (except Henry Clay) whom he mentions; in his unlimited abuse of the "upper ten;" in his exaggerations of our artistic and literary deficiencies; in his "damning with

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\* According to this explanation, it might be argued conversely that Americans would not be able to write well about England; and this we believe to be really the case, up to a certain point, but in a less degree, because, in the nature of things, the American usually has a previous knowledge of more details about England than the Englishman has about America; and, also, because he has more of the French faculty of self-adaptation. Emerson's "English Traits" is not exactly a perfect book, but we believe it to be a better and truer one than any Englishman has written about America.



faint praise" of our women; in his onslaught upon the very eatables and potables of the country.

For an explanation of the causes of this ill-feeling we have not far to look. There is abundant internal evidence that Mr. Grattan was a man of manifold disappointments. He was disappointed because the people, who at first ran after him as a new literary lion, did not continue to treat him up to the mark of his own fancied importance — a very high mark, as we shall soon have occasion to perceive. He was disappointed, as he candidly admits, in some of his pecuniary speculations — a fruitful source of discontent with European visitors, even before Mrs. Trollope's celebrated millinery bazaar at Cincinnati. He was disappointed because his countrymen, the Irish, were not altogether popular with the better classes in America, particularly in those quarters where the English were most appreciated. He was disappointed because some of "our most remarkable men" indirectly snubbed him, and because some of "our best society" did not throw open their doors to him. Some of these griefs he has himself expressed with great *naïveté*; others may be deduced from his pages by a very small exercise of the logical process. Besides these, there is another, of more recondite origin, but, perhaps, the bitterest of all — the disappointment which Mr. Grattan, as an ultra-Liberal, felt in the working of our Democratic institutions, as measured by their practical and social deviations from his ideal standard.

No one who has studied and watched the fluctuations of British feeling towards us, can have failed to perceive that within, say eighteen years, a great change has taken place in the respective position of English parties with regard to America. Previous to that time, it was perfectly understood and agreed that the Tories attacked everything American, as a bit of home party business; while the Whigs defended us — sometimes in a rather supercilious and over-patronizing manner — but, at any rate, defended us, and that as a piece of domestic party business also. But a period came when some awkward accidents, such as repudiation, brought us temporarily into very bad odor in Europe, and this period happened nearly to coincide with the first weakening of the old English political party ties. Ever since then a number



of the English Liberals — of course, we do not mean to say *all*, but a number — especially of the more advanced or radical ones, have felt as if “their pet bear had not danced to the genteelest of tunes,” and have vented their disappointment on the bear’s head accordingly. In other words, they have sought to make the American people pay for any imperfections in the working of liberal institutions.

This was notoriously the case with the late *Foreign Quarterly*, a Palmerstonian-Whig organ, and a bitter enemy of America, during the last years of its existence. That periodical expressly and stoutly disclaimed any intention of attacking those political institutions which other writers were endeavoring to make responsible for whatever went amiss in America; and laid the whole blame on the origin and character of the people, whom it politely described as a “brigand confederation,” formed, like fabled Rome, from the off-scourings of all lands, and not only destitute but incapable of all the graces and most of the virtues of civilization. Of “liberal” travellers who have visited the country, and gone away to abuse it without stint, Dickens is a striking instance. And, generally, we believe, that, of late years, Americans, whether in their individual or collective capacity, are more likely to receive justice at the hands of English conservatives than of English radicals, because the former are more inclined to regard us independently of our political institutions, while the latter are disposed to make us, in a manner, personally responsible for any real or apparent ill consequences of them.\* That Mr. Grattan comes under the head of disappointed radicals, is evident from his remark that there is in America “so much to approve of politically, and so much to condemn socially,” an idea which he repeats several times, under different forms.

The next striking feature in Mr. Grattan’s book is the immense assumption that characterizes it throughout.

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\* Of course, there are exceptions. Mr. Bright is the most salient. His admiration of us is positively dangerous to our reputation, as all exaggerated praise is dangerous, from the re-action which must some day follow. Were he at the head of a large and powerful party, the old political division of English opinion with regard to us might be revived with tenfold vigor. But his present doctrines are not generally popular, in spite of all his eloquence and plausibility.



He constitutes himself, *ex cathedra*, judge of everything, from the deepest philosophical questions to the minutest trifles of what Mr. Turveydrop calls "deportment." In the very first page of his introduction, he jauntily alludes to Guizot, Comte, Buckle, and others of a like stamp, as authors whom he does not *quite* pretend to equal. A writer of ordinary modesty might have hesitated to name himself in the same sentence with Guizot, Comte, or Buckle; but modesty is not the proverbial failing of Mr. Grattan's countrymen, and we are, therefore, less surprised to see him, immediately after, disposing of a most profound social and political problem, by the casual remark that "he cannot understand how great moral principles should become subservient to the control of climate." It is just possible that all the things which Mr. Grattan cannot understand would make a book even larger than these two volumes.

This assumption of unbounded superiority shows itself everywhere in the book; in his superb advice to the American people to be content with that *inferior* kind of civilization to which they are able to attain; in his slashing judgments on men of literary and political standing far above his own; in his amusingly saucy patronage of particular individuals (we would give something to see Prince John's face when he reads the notice of the Van Buren family); above all, in his dogmatical decisions on all points of good breeding and polite conduct. As it is here that Mr. G.'s self-sufficiency takes the boldest and widest range, one cannot help inquiring what were the antecedents which gave him the right to constitute himself *ensor morum* and *arbiter elegantium*, and to give lessons in all the humanities of social life to the whole American — or, as he prefers to call us, the whole Yankee nation.

Mr. Grattan was the relative of an orator and politician, not exactly the greatest that the world has ever produced, but, certainly, distinguished in his time and country. He was "brought out" in the literary world, chiefly under the auspices of our countryman, Washington Irving, and soon became a fair second-class literary man. He wrote some very readable novels, of which his best friends would probably dare to say no more than that they were about up to the current average of G. P.



R. James'. He also wrote some respectable volumes of what, for the want of anything better, it is generally agreed to call history. He came to America as Consul; he had previously been Consul on the Continent.

Now, we should be sorry to say anything in disparagement of the worshipful body of Consuls — a body in which we can count some connections, and several valued personal friends. At the same time, we state nothing disrespectful to that class, but simply an incontrovertible fact, in saying, that a Consul's position, even in America, does not give him *exactly* the same opportunity of seeing all classes of society that is enjoyed by some other personages — an Ambassador, for instance. Of course, nothing of this kind ever entered into the head of Mr. Grattan, who obviously considers himself the most important as well as the most capable of all the diplomatic functionaries in America during his time; but the fact remains, nevertheless, and, therefore, in default of anything in Mr. G.'s position which authorizes him to pronounce so dogmatically on the topics in question, we are driven to look for internal evidences of his fitness or unfitness. Fortunately, a crucial passage soon occurs, which may be taken as a most decisive test of his pretension to be a superior judge of what constitutes and distinguishes a gentleman. In his strictures on Daniel Webster's first speeches after his return from England, he charges him, among other sins of omission, with having said "nothing disparaging of the Queen." A leading public man returns from a country where he has been cordially and magnificently received and entertained, and his censor blames him for not having taken the first *public* opportunity to speak ill of the Sovereign of that country, and that Sovereign a woman! Comment is decidedly superfluous.\*

There is yet another pervading feature in Mr. G.'s book, less on the surface than the two already mentioned,

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\* All Mr. G.'s remarks here are a curious study in respect of what he thinks Webster *ought* to have said. It is plain, to a reader of moderate reflection, that, according to the programme which *he* would have drawn out, Webster's discourse would have been made a fit pendant, *mutatis mutandis*, to that speech, the delight of all Europe, which Count de Morny delivered to the French Legislature after his return from Russia.



but scarcely less important, when we come to examine his observations on American society. He had lived some time on the Continent; his social ideal was, therefore, not the pure English, but a mixture of English and Continental — the latter, probably, predominating more than he himself was aware of. We have frequently noticed this semi-unconscious eclecticism in men whose experience of life has extended over different countries; they refer the elegancies and proprieties of social intercourse, as well as the graver traits of character and morals, to a composite standard, which has no real existence in any country, but has been formed in their own minds out of the customs and traditions of many — more or less feasible, more or less inconsistent, according as the mind of the speculator is more or less logical.

Thus: one of Mr. Grattan's earliest and strongest convictions, that "the people of the country are seen to the greatest advantage in masses," is undoubtedly true; but it is as undoubtedly true (though perhaps in a less degree) of the English people as compared with the people of the Continent. Taken individually, or as one of a small social circle, the single Englishman, like the single American, does not, on the whole, show any marked intellectual superiority over the single Frenchman or Italian — in some respects he is positively inferior. But a mass of Anglo-Saxons, English or American, are infinitely superior to a mass of Frenchmen or Italians. Why? Because the moment that the Latin-Celts tend to form a mass, the all-pervading, everywhere-interfering spirit of their *paternal* governments, their bureaucracy, their universal protective system, steps in and renders them helpless. The Latins, and most of the Continental Teutons, are political babies, who have never had the full and fair opportunity of learning to act in masses. The Anglo-Saxons having had this opportunity, multiply enormously their individual strength when united in bodies.

Similarly, to pass from a large subject to a small one, Mr. G. observes, that "the great majority of men in America have small taste for female society." Now, this is comparatively true, if we take the Continental nations for our standard; but positively false, if we compare the American with the Englishman. Taking the average of all classes, the American is decidedly as much



more of a "ladies' man" than the Englishman, as he is less so than the Frenchman. The first remark of an American woman in England (unless she happens to arrive in the train of some official character) is the absence of attention, compared with what she has received at home and on the Continent; and it has always been a puzzle to us how the English ladies contrive to amuse themselves, as they do, *without the gentlemen*.

To take up and go through this book in regular order is next to impossible, because there is no regular order in it — not even a chronological one. Politics and personal experience and general reflections are thrown together, often in the same chapter, often in alternate chapters, so that to bring them out of chaos, and arrange them under separate and regularly digested heads, would really be more trouble than to re-write the whole work. *McG* His remarks on society and general national traits are those which first arrest the attention, from the number of startling assertions which they contain — assertions which the majority of native readers will probably stigmatize as flagrant mis-statements, but which we prefer to designate as very imperfect generalizations from exceptional cases.

Thus he mentions, quite *en passant*, as a fact about which there can be no doubt, that is common for young women to marry men "old enough to be their grandfathers." Now, if there is a country in the world where young women do *not* habitually marry old, or even elderly men, that country is the United States of America. This assertion holds good, not of any section of country or class of society, but, in its broadest sense, of the whole country, and every class and "set" in every part of it. In fact, the fault is just the other way; it has been observed over and over again, both by native and foreign writers, that there is generally not sufficient difference of age between husband and wife. The husband ought to be *somewhat* the elder in every country, and particularly in ours, both because our women are sooner developed in mind and manners than our men, and because they give way sooner physically; but it happens, in the majority of cases, that they are very nearly the same age. If we were to say that the union of a young woman in good society to a man "old enough to be her grandfather"



would be regarded as all but infamous, and followed by total or partial loss of caste, our statement might be too strong, but it would be far nearer the truth than Mr. G.'s *obiter dictum* the other way. For the benefit of any foreigners who may chance to read our remarks without having had personal experience of American society, we add that this is not a question of fact only, but also one of theory. Our position may be proved negatively, on two theoretical grounds. First, given an uncontrolled choice by young women, without restraint or compulsion on the part of the parents, and also a free social intercourse between young persons of both sexes (and that both these exist in America no one will pretend to deny), it is not human nature that any large fraction of young women should marry old men, especially when we consider, in addition, that in no country are there more women having means of their own, or reasonable expectations, than in America. Secondly, if it were the rule, instead of the exception, for young women to marry old men, it would not be human nature that the evils attendant elsewhere on such a practice should not follow here, and American society would be highly immoral, which our most violent assailants have never dared to assert.

"We next come to a statement referring to a more limited class of persons, but equally startling within its limits. Mr. Grattan affirms that American women abroad, invariably are, or pretend to be, home sick, and that they constantly insist on returning home, against the wishes and contrary to the pecuniary interests of their husbands. This is so ludicrous a contortion of fact, that we were some time in doubt of Mr. G.'s being in earnest. We more than half suspected him of indulging in that "lurking satire" for which he gives himself credit, and which he conceives us half-civilized Americans incapable of detecting. It is much plainer than the nose on Mr. G.'s face that the tendency to absenteeism, so prevalent among our Upper Ten, is almost entirely the ladies' work. In nineteen cases out of twenty, it is the husband who wants to come home (if for no other reason, because he has "affairs" of some sort to look after), and the wife who wants to stay, and who does stay, abroad. Sometimes, the good man is actually persuaded



into fancying that he prefers Europe to his own country; sometimes he acquiesces passively, as American husbands are wont to do. Here, again, there is a perfectly consistent theoretical explanation of the fact to be found. The absentee tendency of American ladies is, if not excused, certainly accounted for by the consideration that of our national amusements the greater part are amusements for men only. Ladies cannot shoot, or drive trotters, or attend political meetings. Owing to the severity of our climate, the utter want of parks and promenades in and about our large cities, the inferiority of the stage, and the almost solely masculine character of our turf attendance, it is hardly too much to say, that, for a large portion of the year, a lady who does not like balls and dancing has really no means of amusement whatever. But the feminine mind requires amusement as much now as it did in Pope's time\*; so our ladies go abroad for what they cannot find at home. Another reason frequently given, the comparative freedom from domestic annoyances, we believe to be somewhat exaggerated, but so far as it holds good, it also affects the women more than the men.

Another astounding discovery of Mr. G.'s is, that "our native writers are generally neglected," and our most distinguished literary men "kept in a social position far below their merits; utterly unknown in the very places of which their names are the chief ornaments." Here, strange as it may seem, we really believe that Mr. G. writes in something like good faith. His error appears to be owing, not so much to a wilful intention of perverting the truth, as to the illogical habit of mind that shows itself throughout the argumentative part of his book — a habit of making *serious bulls*, confusing things separate, joining things incompatible. Take the case of Prescott, one of those whom he singles out by name, as "receiving no popular consideration." Prescott's book's were bought and read and praised everywhere. He was one of the idols of society in his own city. He was a welcome guest in all others, wherever he chose to go.

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\* "Men some to business, some to pleasure take,  
But every woman is at heart a rake."

Meaning that every woman likes amusement and society, as is evident from the context.



What *ought* to have been done for Prescott that was not done? Could he, with his physical infirmities, have been made Governor of Massachusetts, or Minister to England? We cannot recall a single instance in which a literary man, *wishing to engage in public life*, has not been readily brought forward by his party; but we *can* recall several attempts to drag literary men into public life in spite of themselves — attempts sometimes positively ludicrous; as when it was seriously proposed to “run” Washington Irving as Democratic candidate for Mayor of New-York. Mr. Grattan has blundered all round the true state of the case, in several places, without hitting it. He characterizes Edward Everett as a man fitted for a purely literary life, unfitted for a political one. How far this is true of Everett, we shall not stop to inquire (and most decidedly shall not take Mr. G.’s word for it implicitly), but it certainly is true of a majority of our first literary men. They are modest, retiring, almost *feminine* in character, frequently delicate in health, quite indisposed to the rough and hard work of party politics. Whosoever fault it is that more of them do not hold official positions (if it *be* a fault at all\*), it most positively is not the fault of the American public, and to tax that public with it, is the height of unfairness.

Perhaps, however, we are misinterpreting Mr. Grattan, and he is merely referring to the *social* position of our literary stars. If so, we can only say, that in this, as in many other instances, our experience has been diametrically the opposite of his. We never saw or heard of any set of men or women who thought themselves too good for the society of Irving, or Prescott, or Longfellow, and we do not believe that any such set exists in the Union. A person disposed to be captious and hypercritical might, indeed, suggest that these gentlemen are in “our best society” not by virtue of their literary merits, but simply as members of a certain set; in other words, that their fashionable position is apart from and independent of their literary one. This fine-drawn but not impossible distinction might go to prove that our

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\* Where literary men, *as a class*, have had predominant influence in politics (as in various Continental States, and more than once in France), they have invariably succeeded in making a frightful mess of things.



fashionables are not so literary and intellectual as they should be, or as those of some other countries are, but it does not touch the point at issue here. In fact, Mr. G. has here again put his saddle altogether on the wrong horse. If a foreigner does not meet at a ball or *soiree* so many of our literary lions as he expects, it is because they do not choose to come. Mrs. Potiphar is always too happy to invite and entertain Curtis Pacha, without hope or fear of the consequences in his next book. But, very likely, Curtis Pacha finds the thing a bore, and thinks he can pass the evening more amusingly and instructively to himself in his study or at his club. Then the foreigner, if he be a man of Mr. G.'s logical calibre, puts down prominently in his memoranda that the Pacha is in a social position far below his merits.

The three instances above are fair specimens of Mr. Grattan's imperfect generalizations; they are but three out of a vast number which we have not time or space even to allude to.

The disquisitions on American politics it would be impossible to discuss in any other than a partisan newspaper, seeing that the whole subject is treated in the most narrow partisan spirit. This was, perhaps, to be expected from the man who blames Daniel Webster for not introducing English politics into his American speeches; but we certainly were not prepared to find Mr. Grattan descending to retail the lowest stump and pot-house slang, such as charging the Whigs (Horace Greeley among the rest, we suppose,) with trying to establish a privileged class in the country.

But it is in the deductive portions of his book, whenever he comes to draw conclusions, that Mr. G.'s illogical habit of mind is most conspicuous. He never makes an inference without showing his utter want of wisdom, *i. e.*, the perception of analogies and discrimination of differences, or, to compress our definition, the discernment of things compatible and incompatible. Thus he takes nearly a whole chapter, to show that our women have no hearts, and our men are incapable of serious attachment. This theme he works out with a virulence at times bordering on profanity, as when, literally investing himself with the Divine attributes of omnipresence and omniscience, he asserts that "no young man ever blushed at being



refused, and no young woman ever wept at rejecting" her lover. The plain truth of which, when stripped of Mr. G.'s characteristic hyperbole, is, that our people have not the headlong passions, or all-engrossing vanity of the Celts and Latins; that they do not behave like the personages of an Italian romance, or a French novel; that they do not put the terrestrial Venus in place of duty, common sense, and religion combined, and, consequently, are not hopelessly upset by a love-disappointment — do not "die of love," or kill themselves for love, as he expressly states. It never occurred to Mr. G. that this coldness of temperament — attribute it to religion, habit, education, climate, what you will — is an indispensable element in American society, as at present constituted. Take a social state of things, in which parents have no authority over their adult children, and husbands little authority over their wives, where young people of both sexes mix freely without restraint, and there is a very limited range of amusements for married women — the strong Anglo-Saxon sense of personal and domestic honor supreme over all this — then inspire these people with the ardent and impulsive affections of the Italian, or the egregious *amour propre* of the Gaul,\* and a very few years would bring about a general catclysm of society. Our belles would be the cause of countless suicides, duels, assassinations, abductions *à l'Irlandaise*; our married life would be poisoned by suspicion, if not tainted with intrigue; the bowie-knife and revolver, already too common in the West and South, would become household implements all over the country, and moral chaos would be the result.

The viciousness of Mr. Grattan's logic is particularly evident in his speculations on the possibility of improvement or progress in our society. Here, his arguments throughout are like Trinculo's government — "the latter end mistrusts the beginning." The standard of American civilization he repeatedly asserts to be imperfect, and all the vials of his wrath are poured out on those who seek to elevate it. The appearance and character of the people he represents as utterly monotonous; and if any individuals adopt a different standard from the mass, they

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\* Our national vanity is not exactly a thing to be denied, but it rarely takes the particular turn of the Frenchman's.



are enemies of the nation, and pitiable self-tormentors. The Americans are ignorant of their intellectual and artistic deficiencies, for want of something wherewith to compare themselves on this side of the Atlantic; and those who seek such means of comparison on the other side, are clumsy and "inflated" pretenders.

We give timely notice, that our remarks on this topic will carry us a long way in advance of Mr. Grattan; nevertheless, the reader who pays strict attention can hardly fail to perceive that the following considerations grow most legitimately and logically out of the subject — nay, are necessary to its full comprehension. Moreover, in anticipation of any possible charge of plagiarism, we make a clean breast beforehand, and confess to having borrowed a little of John Stuart Mills' thunder, and forged a few of his bolts over again in our own very imperfect smithy, the temptation to adapt and apply some of his general observations to this particular case proving utterly irresistible.

One of the great tendencies of the present age is, to *efface the individual*. It might, at first sight, appear that, with the spread of political freedom and the abrogation of class distinctions, the power of the private citizen must be increased; but the very ability of freemen *as a mass*, tends to weaken, by assimilation, each unit of the mass in his separate capacity. This tendency is not confined to political democracies, like America, or social democracies, like France; it exists in England, to a less degree, indeed, but quite sufficiently to attract the attention and excite the fears of thinking men; it exists in all countries. In brief, it is *the* evil of the age, as the oppression of the masses was the evil of the preceding feudal ages. Unquestionably, the smaller evil of the two, it is still a very serious one, since it arrests intellectual progress. For almost all intellectual progress is owing to eminent individuals. Governments are far more likely to retard than advance improvements; and the masses, however powerful when once started, are seldom capable of originating anything great. Even in morals, the same or a similar rule holds good; the principle of "doing as everybody does," is a certain road to a low moral standard; and the man who wishes to live up to the better part of his nature, must set before



himself an ideal model superior to that furnished by those around him. The development of individual peculiarities should, therefore, by all means, be encouraged, not discouraged; for, if the eccentric individuals are but ordinary men, they can produce no effect, and will, therefore, do no harm, and, at any rate, they afford a pleasing variety; if they are superior men, they are pretty certain to do some good. As what many short-sighted politicians would consider the strongest recommendation of a proposed measure, *that it is in accordance with the governmental theory of the country*, is no recommendation at all to the philosopher, but *much the reverse, because every form of government has a tendency to intensify its own abuses*; so it is really no panegyric on a citizen, to say that he says and does everything like his fellow-citizens. The practical conclusion from all which is, that if any individuals in America have ideas, or aspirations, or tastes, or habits, or rules of conduct different from those of the mass, instead of being denounced by small demagogues at home, or stray foreigners of Mr. Grattan's stamp,\* as enemies of the country, they ought positively to be regarded as public benefactors. If Mr. G. is really in earnest in attributing to such persons the feverish day dream of wishing to establish a privileged class, he may safely dismiss this insane idea from his mind. Their desires are much more limited. The only privilege they ask is, *to be let alone*, to be allowed to follow their own way, and express their own opinions, without interference, insult, or slander.

What Mr. Grattan charges as a folly, and almost a crime, on some of these persons (his denunciations here, too, strangely agreeing with those of some very low politicians among ourselves), that they admire England, and in some things imitate the English, is really the strongest testimony in their favor. He asserts, more than once, that want of a standard of comparison renders Americans ignorant of their deficiencies in literature and the arts. This statement, though exaggerated, is partly true; and

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\* Mr. Grattan evidently considers himself altogether different from, and superior to, any American — in fact, belonging to quite another order of beings. We, on the contrary, judge him, from his book, to have many points in common with a third or fourth class American. We think, for instance, that he would make a capital village editor, or bar-room politician.



our ignorance would be still greater, if we took his advice; and excluded all consideration of European models. Doubtless, he is consistent in giving this advice. Wishing us all manner of ill, he naturally desires that our civilization should deteriorate, as he prophesies that it must do; and his jealousy as an Irishman has also some little share in his anger against the admirers of England. Fortunately, our educated countrymen are not disposed to follow such perilous counsel. The cultivated American, who feels that man does not live by bread alone, and that boundless physical resources do not comprise all that is necessary to happiness, naturally looks to the old world for instruction. His choice lies between England and France. He can hardly help taking some bias from one or the other. And when we consider the relative position of the two countries, in respect to civil and religious liberty, domestic morals, and general manliness of character, can there be a doubt as to which is the more desirable model?

A servile and indiscriminating admiration of England would, indeed, be a great absurdity, as well as a great evil; but, whatever danger there may have been of this, in some quarters, at the time when Paulding wrote, there certainly is very little now-a-days. The tendency of our countrymen is too apt to be the other way. The masses are frequently inspired by a blind and inconsiderate hatred, based on obsolete traditions, and fomented by the worst class of native demagogues and foreign refugees; while the upper-ten are inordinate consumers of the very *Camelia-like* lotus which flourishes in and about Paris. There is a very large class of persons who consider it *unpatriotic* to admit that England — or, indeed, any country — is superior to us in *anything*. A most short-sighted patriotism, this; for it is as old as *Æsop*, that the man who boasts of what he has not, will, in the end, fail to gain credit for what he has. The most certain way of making the English acknowledge our superiority, where it really exists, is to acknowledge theirs where it really exists. Doubtless, he is but a silly theorist who attempts to realize a purely foreign ideal; but he who aims at idealizing existing institutions, by the help of hints picked up from all quarters, it not necessarily chasing a shadow. And we count it no paradox



to say, that the American who has the profoundest admiration for England will also be the best able to appreciate the peculiar excellences of his own country, whether they present resemblances to or differences from the corresponding English traits.

Thus, we agree with Mr. Grattan, that American civilization has, and ought to have, a peculiar stamp and type of its own, and that this type is, *in some respects*, inferior to that of some countries in the old world; but, on the other hand, we maintain that, in other respects, it is superior to that of any country — England *not* excepted. To prove this assertion, we appeal to the position of woman in America. We shall not insist on the proposition in its broadest terms, that the relative condition of women advances *pari passu* with the march of civilization, though many of our readers would accept it at once, and perhaps even regard it as a mere truism. But we do assert, with little fear of contradiction, that women are nearer their true relative place in a civilized country than in a barbarous one, and that a higher relative position of the weaker sex is a *prima facie* evidence of a high state of civilization. Now, there is in America, we do not say more chivalry, for we confess to having taken a great disgust for the word, ever since it has been popularly associated with a local state of things literally translatable by bludgeons, bowie-knives, and bragadocio, but more deference to, and more practical respect for, women than in any other country whatever. It is well known that a woman may travel through the Union without an escort, because, in case of difficulty, the national sentiment makes every respectable man her impromptu protector. *Punch's* "Unprotected Female" would be an impossibility among us.

We certainly do not intend to enter upon the immense subject of civilization — what are its causes, and of what it consists. To do so would require many numbers of Porter. But we must note one thing more before passing on. The general idea of civilization includes at least two great distinct heads — national and intellectual progress — civilization proper and cultivation. The former comprises all purely physical and tangible improvements, with the sciences on which they are founded, and the coarse arts, so to speak, relating to food, dress, and



upholstery; the latter embraces the fine arts and literature. We say, *at least* two great distinct-heads, for, with all due deference to the eminent writers who have adopted the above distinction, we are strongly inclined to make a third separate and independent head, of morals and religion. But setting that question aside, and looking only to the two branches already mentioned, the latter of these may be far more noble, intrinsically; but it is clear that both must be taken into account, in striking the balance between any two countries.

Mr. Grattan thinks he has "smashed" our claims to high civilization, by dwelling on our deficiency in, and want of patronage for the Fine Arts. Here, as almost everywhere, there is a great exaggeration in his charges; but even admitting his premises in their full extent, his inference does not necessarily follow. The modern English are so much less an artistic people than the ancient Athenians were, that any comparison between the two, in that point, would be simply absurd; yet no one, we presume, will deny that the modern English are, on the whole, more civilized than the ancient Athenians. Or, to take two contemporary nations, will any one assert that the entire civilization of the Americans and Italians is, in anything, like the direct ratio of their respective cultivation?

We now approach the most difficult part of our subject. Although *the gentleman*, in some sense may exist under a comparatively barbarous state of society, in his highest sense, he is one of the very highest types of the civilized man. The writer, therefore, who undertakes to treat of the civilization of any people, will naturally have something to say about their gentlemen. Mr. Grattan's treatment of this topic is quite characteristic. He heads one of his pages, "American gentlemen — where to find them;" but all his reasoning is directed to show that they are not to be found at all, or only in instances so rare as to constitute the exceptions which prove the rule. Now, this, we repeat, is perfectly characteristic. One of his main objects being to say as many disagreeable things as possible about the Americans, he hit upon this, among others, as extremely well adapted to annoy them; for even the silliest declaimers against "codfish aristocracy" will hardly like being told that there are no gentlemen



in the country. We say, again, that this is not a light matter to handle. Scarcely anything is easier in popular estimation, than to determine whether this or that man is a gentleman, this or that class of men gentlemen — scarcely anything is, in reality, more difficult. Men who literally have not the first conception of what the word implies, will be excited to the point of endeavoring to cut your throat or blow your brains out, if you call in question their claims to the epithet; and Mr. Grattan evidently considers the decision on a whole nation's gentility as easy as lying, or as a sum in the rule of three. But the modern idea of a gentleman is a very refined and complicated one, and its complete definition would demand a considerable verbal outlay. The opinions of different civilized and *highly* civilized nations as to what may be expected of a gentleman — what he must, and must not do — vary very much on different points. Take, in proof of this, the well-known fact, that the practice of duelling has, in England, been entirely put down by public opinion, while in France it still flourishes in almost its pristine vigor. Even in the same nation, the demands of society are by no means consistent. It certainly enters very largely into the Englishman's notion of a gentleman, that he should have received a liberal education, and a very advanced one — and the conventional proof of this is his having taken a University degree. It is a very common English sentiment, not unfrequently expressed in so many words, that the Dissenters are not gentlemen, because they have not a University education. But then, again, it is quite notorious that, until within a very few years, a large fraction of the English officers (perhaps a majority) were men not only not liberally educated, but very imperfectly educated at all; so imperfectly, that their deficiencies were a common-place source of ridicule for the popular satirist. Yet, no Englishman ever questioned the position of English officers as gentlemen. Moreover, the constituent qualities of a gentleman are clearly divisible into two separate heads — the manners and the sentiments. There is "the outward visible sign," and "the inward spiritual grace." And, admitting that the two must, to a certain extent, coincide, still, the one or the other element may preponderate in the national judgment as well as in the



individual practice. We make these remarks merely to show the manysidedness of the subject, and that it is not to be disposed of by a few sharp and shallow observations, such as, that American editors call bar-keepers "gentlemanly," or that "it takes three generations to make a gentleman."

Mr. Grattan appears to regard the question as one of *manners* alone. This somewhat simplifies the discussion, but by no means removes all our difficulties. When we reflect on the people we have met, who were perfect gentlemen in manners, and perfect scamps in everything else, we really feel inclined to doubt whether a gentleman, in this limited sense, is altogether a desirable product of civilization. When, on the other hand, we consider the number of scamps loose upon society, who are thorough blackguards into the bargain, we hesitate to say anything in disparagement of good manners, lest we should seem to countenance that most fearful of erroneous conclusions, that because good manners are not everything they are therefore nothing, and that a rogue is less a rogue for being a brute in addition. This much, however, is clear, at any rate, that if we admit Mr. Grattan's premises to their fullest extent — if we decide that manners, and manners only, make the gentleman — there is still great fault to be found with the logic of his conclusion. The Americans do not even know what is meant by the term *gentleman*, argues Mr. G., because their newspapers apply the term "gentlemanly" to clerks, bar-keepers, and even servants. Now, that, in the general run of our newspaper writing, a great number of terms are strangely misapplied is a fact — ludicrous or melancholy, according to the light in which the reader chooses to view it. Our press — of course, we do not refer to the *New-York Times*, or the *Washington National Intelligencer*, or either of the *Posts* — New-York or Boston — or the *Spirit* — is generally characterized by a loose use of words, which presents a startling contrast to the precision of an English or French journalist. The same remark is perfectly applicable to Irish newspapers; and we have a very strong suspicion that for these vagaries of journalism, as well as for some of flowers of oratory, which adorn our public debates, and cause perpetual amusement to intelligent natives and curious foreigners,



we are, in a great measure, indebted to Mr. G.'s countrymen. But his inference from the particular case which he selects is, we repeat, by no means logical. Let us first look at the literal meaning of the word in question. *Gentlemanly* means *gentlemanlike*. The application of it to certain actions of an individual does not imply that he is in all respects a gentleman, or that the party applying the term to those actions considers him such. This is clearly shown by the converse case. It unfortunately sometimes happens that gentlemen, under the influence of wine, or jealousy, or anger, or other strong passion or temptation, commit ungentlemanly acts; and a frequent repetition of such acts would, doubtless, make the offender lose his position, and bring him to the level of an ordinary Congressman or Alderman. But there is no moralist or *etiquettist* so strict as to maintain that an isolated act of this kind renders the erring party, henceforth and forever, no gentleman.

Looking a little further, we find that the rule which attaches certain manners to a peculiar class, is subject to numerous exceptions, and not altogether a perfectly safe guide in practice. The *maitre d'hotel*, or the first valet of an old wealthy European household, is often a capital imitation of a gentleman, and may, with the utmost propriety, be designated a very gentlemanly man. Transport him to some place where he is not known, and the chances are, that, until his antecedents are found out, or some accident betrays his want of a liberal education, he will be able to impose himself on society as a gentleman. On the other hand, there are many men of rank and fortune — Frenchmen, Italians, yea, even Englishmen — whose outward semblance is not that of gentlemen at all. We do not refer to their being guilty of gross language or rude acts, but to their general dress, demeanor, and style of conversation, which are almost certain to mislead a stranger. We have seen a duke taken for a horsecoper, and known a marquis to be mistaken for his own groom. The more we consider Mr. Grattan's remarks on this subject, the more narrow and inadequate do they appear to us. He seems to have no conception of personal dignity or inborn delicacy of feeling; or, if he has, it is associated with the exquisitely snobbish idea, that such qualities can only belong to



people with a big rentroll and a handle to their names. One of the most gentlemanly men we ever had the pleasure of knowing (Mr. Grattan may sneer if he pleases) was a village blacksmith.

Our author has, indeed, settled the whole question to his own satisfaction, in a very trenchant and off-hand way. "It takes three generations to make a gentleman" — three generations of rich people. But, in America, it usually happens that if the grandfather is rich, the grandchildren are poor; therefore, the Americans have no chance of becoming gentlemen. This is certainly a very expeditious conclusion, and has the additional advantage of being extremely flattering to such rich men as have rejoiced in rich grandfathers, of whom a few are actually extant in America to the present day. But, although Mr. G. has drawn up this plausible dictum in the form of a syllogism, it will not hold water on strict examination. Mr. G. seems to forget that the United States *had a certain number of gentlemen to start with*. All traces of these have not quite been swept away by the fluctuations of democracy. In some of the older Southern States, such as Virginia and South Carolina, the very names that were at the head of fashionable society in colony times are so still; and their diminished fortunes only prove Mr. G.'s additional error, in asserting that a "poor gentleman," in European sense of the term, does not exist among us. In New-York, some of the original Knickerbockers have done better, preserving their wealth and position both. Mr. G., in common with some native scribblers of small account (his agreement with whom we have already had occasion, more than once, to notice), would probably characterize this last sentence as tautological. According to him, the fashionable society of an American town is composed solely of the richest families in it. This is altogether a mistake. Even in the richest and most luxurious of our Atlantic cities, there are millionaires out of "our set," and persons of very moderate means in it. No doubt wealth is a very important element of our fashionable society; so it is in that of every country — at least, every rich, commercial, and progressive country. In every such country, persons are to be found occupying the highest stalls in Vanity Fair, whose chief or only claim to be there is their wealth.



We are much inclined to suspect that Mr. Grattan's opportunities for seeing "our best society" were more limited than he likes to allow, and that he has, in more than one place, confounded *fashionable* with *official* society — as great a mistake in America as it would be in France. Had he been at home among our Upper Ten, he could hardly have failed to notice their second-hand Parisianism, which, though falling far short of the *esprit*, and, we are happy to add, of the vice also of its prototype, shows itself in a hundred unmistakable ways.

Our own idea of the American gentleman is analogous to that which we have of American civilization. He has a type of his own, notwithstanding his occasional imitations of Englishmen, or more frequently of Frenchmen. This type is, in some respects, inferior to various European types; in other respects it is superior to them all; in others, again, the question is open. Thus, the American gentleman is certainly not educated up to the English standard, perhaps hardly up to the French. He has not the artistic cultivation of the German or Italian; but his delicacy of sentiment, manifesting itself in the general tenor of his words and actions, is, in some very important points, superior to that of any European. We have spoken of the general American respect for woman; and, as the best qualities of a nation are usually intensified in its gentlemen, it is here that the American gentleman shows to the greatest advantage. The Frenchman is wonderfully civil, and attentive, and complimentary, to a lady *in public*, but in private he will not hesitate to insult her grossly, by telling her indecent stories, under pretence of amusing her, or trying to force what he calls *his love*, on her, when it is not wanted; nor will he shrink from circulating all manner of lies and scandal about her, afterwards, if she sends him to — the patron deity of most Frenchmen. The Englishman has a high respect for women *of his own rank*; but his aristocratic feelings and education lead him to form an unfavorable opinion of the virtue of those below him. The American alone respects every woman who respects herself. This feeling, with him, is a habit of mind, quite independent of religion, or hypocrisy, or Mrs. Grundy, showing itself in a variety of ways — among others, in an absence of disposition to talk smut after dinner or supper (the



Frenchmen begin after breakfast). We once heard a distinguished Englishman recalling, with much interest, the agreeable evenings he had spent at the *Century*; he concluded by declaring that what gave him the greatest pleasure and surprise combined, was the total absence of anything that would not bear repetition in a drawing-room.

In some things the American and European standards are at variance. Thus, one of *our* characteristics of a gentleman is, that he is hospitable, and particularly hospitable to strangers. So far is this from being the case abroad, that anything like general hospitality is considered an immediate mark of a vulgar *parvenu*. The oldest and richest nobles of Paris and Genoa fall, in this respect, far below the American idea of a gentleman. Who is wrong? If our countrymen are, we frankly prefer to be wrong with them.

And now, taking leave (at last) of our gentlemen, we must say a few words of our ladies. Mr. Grattan has given them the benefit of his valuable opinion, that they are, „beyond all comparison, superior to the majority of the men, in appearance and manners.” This preference of the women of a country to the men, by a male traveller, we have frequently remarked, as well as the corresponding preference of the men to the women, by a female traveller; a species of rivalry, more felt than acknowledged, is generally the reason of such preferences. In Mr. G.’s case, however, it is not that he loves our women more, but our men less. He has said as much, direct or indirect, harm about them, as he could conveniently. Some of his strangest mistakes we have already commented upon. Where a man fires so many shot, some of them are pretty sure to hit; and he has made one undeniable hit in stigmatizing the practice of inveigling away other people’s servants, a practice which, we blush to say, some women in good society think it decent and lady-like to follow. A true lady would rather cook her dinner herself, or go without it, than be guilty of such meanness.

It is quite a relief to find something to praise in this book. Not but that it contains several other pertinent and correct observations; but, unfortunately, they have all been made before. We can scarcely pick out



anything of value which has not been already said — and better said — by native or foreign writers, or both. All the originality is mistake or misrepresentation. The best parts of the work are its lightest parts; and we think Mr. G. would have done much better, had he suppressed all his would-be philosophy and “civilization,” and confined himself to turning out a book of jokes. The answer of his newly-caught countryman, who, being asked if he was a native, replied: “No; but I mane to be,” is worthy a place among classic bulls.

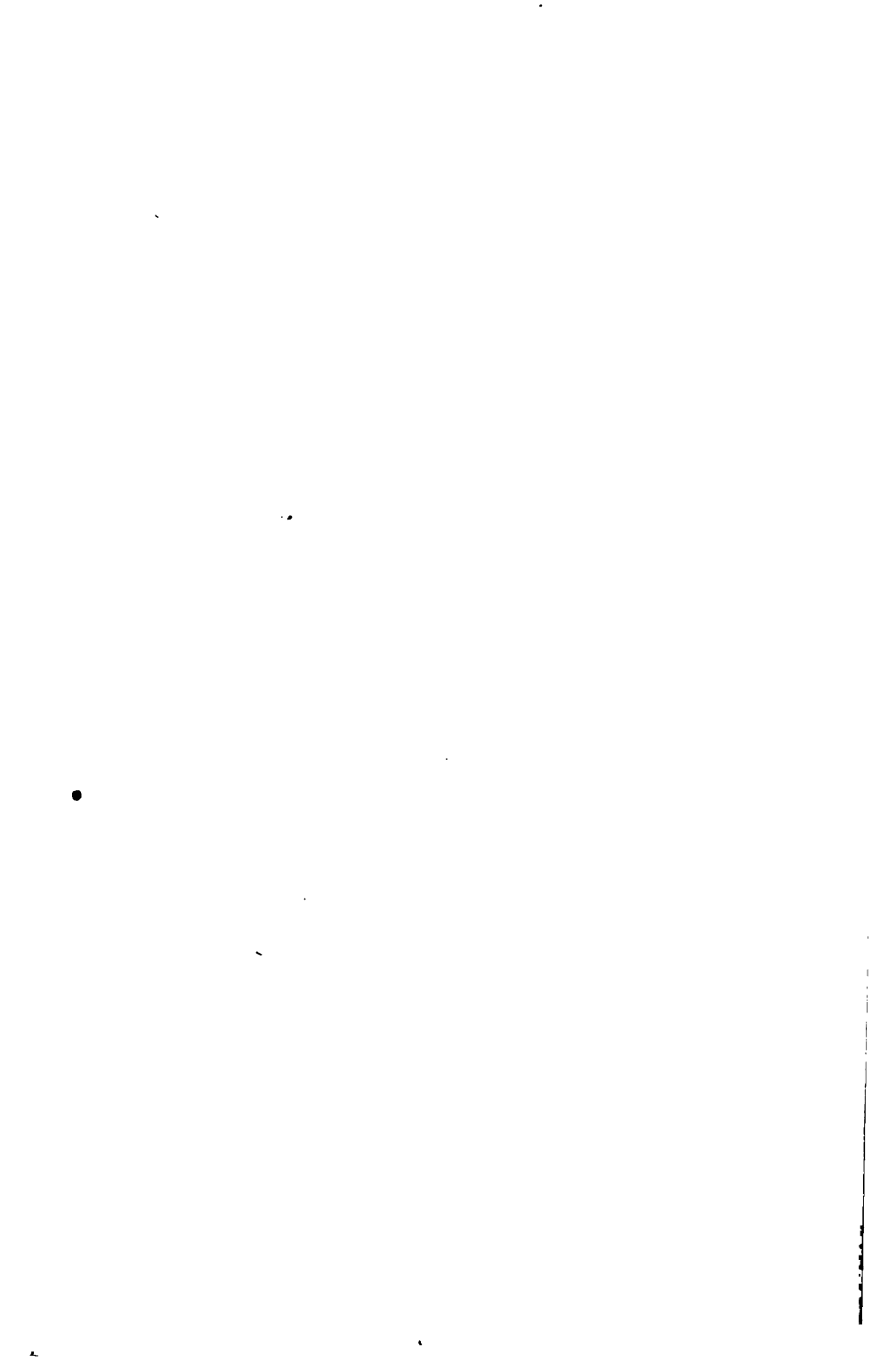
And now, if any person thinks that we have been amusing or gratifying ourselves by “pitching into” Mr. G.’s book, that person is greatly mistaken. A more disagreeable task we never undertook. It was particularly unpleasant to be obliged to say anything of the author’s antecedents, but this he has brought upon himself. Had he united high patrician birth, great literary renown, and wide diplomatic experience; had he been a Stanley, a Bulwer, and a Talleyrand, rolled into one, it would hardly have justified the tone he has assumed. We take leave of his book with a feeling of unmitigated sorrow that it was ever written. Save to the pockets of author or publisher, it can do no good, and is certain to do a great deal of harm. There is no excuse for it in party or social necessities of any kind. An English Tory (if the animal still exists) may think it his duty to write against the Americans; an American who fears the corruption of his countrymen by Parisian ideas, may think it his duty to write against the French. But our political institutions Mr. Grattan rather professes to approve of; and our social institutions in no way threaten or interfere with those of England or Ireland. His work is, throughout, a mere ebullition of personal ill-feeling, and we know not whether it is more calculated to give foreigners false and odious ideas of us, or to embitter among ourselves the already existing and not altogether unprovoked prejudices against foreign travellers and book-makers.

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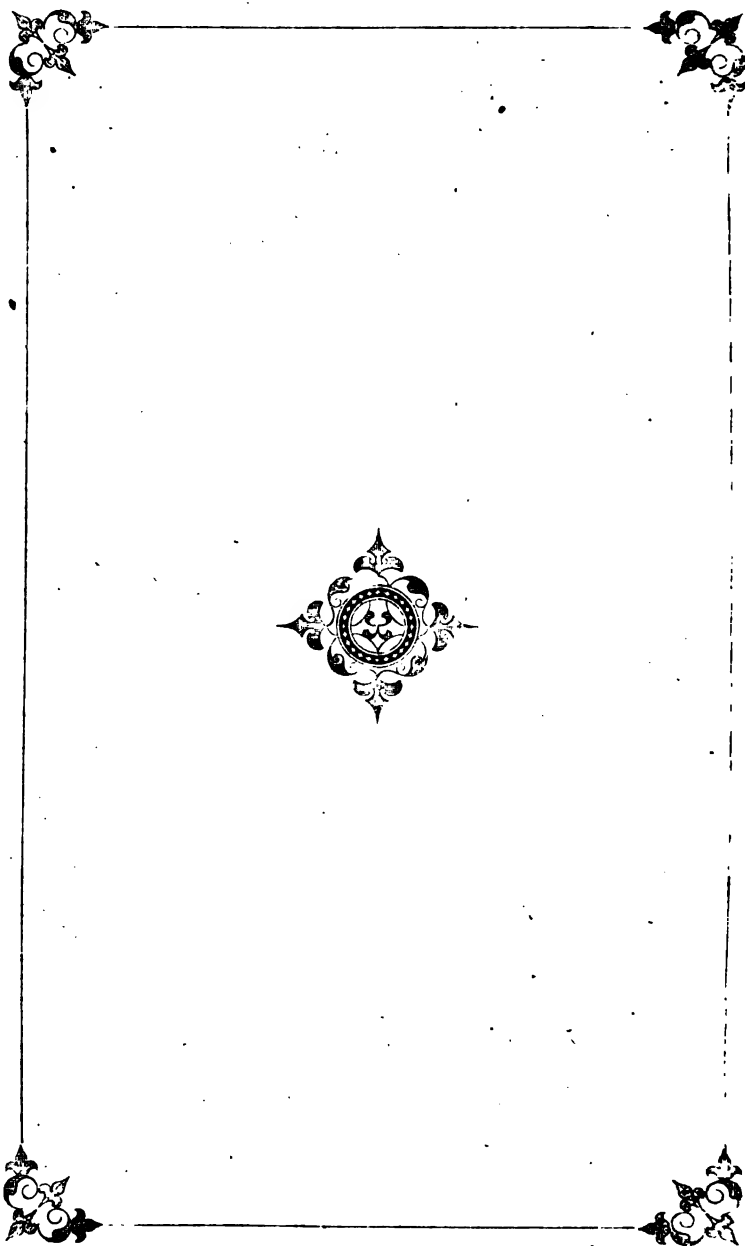












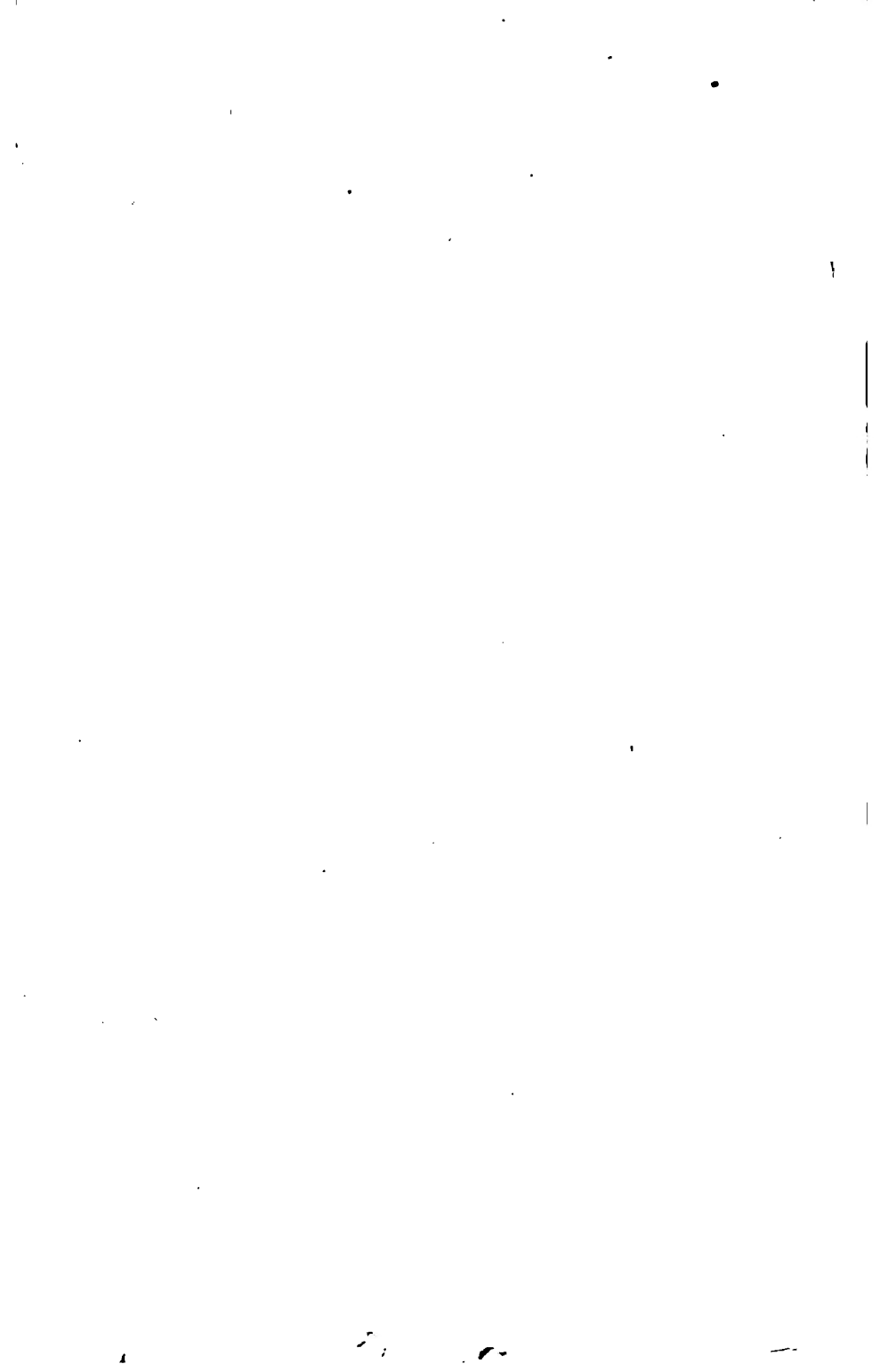




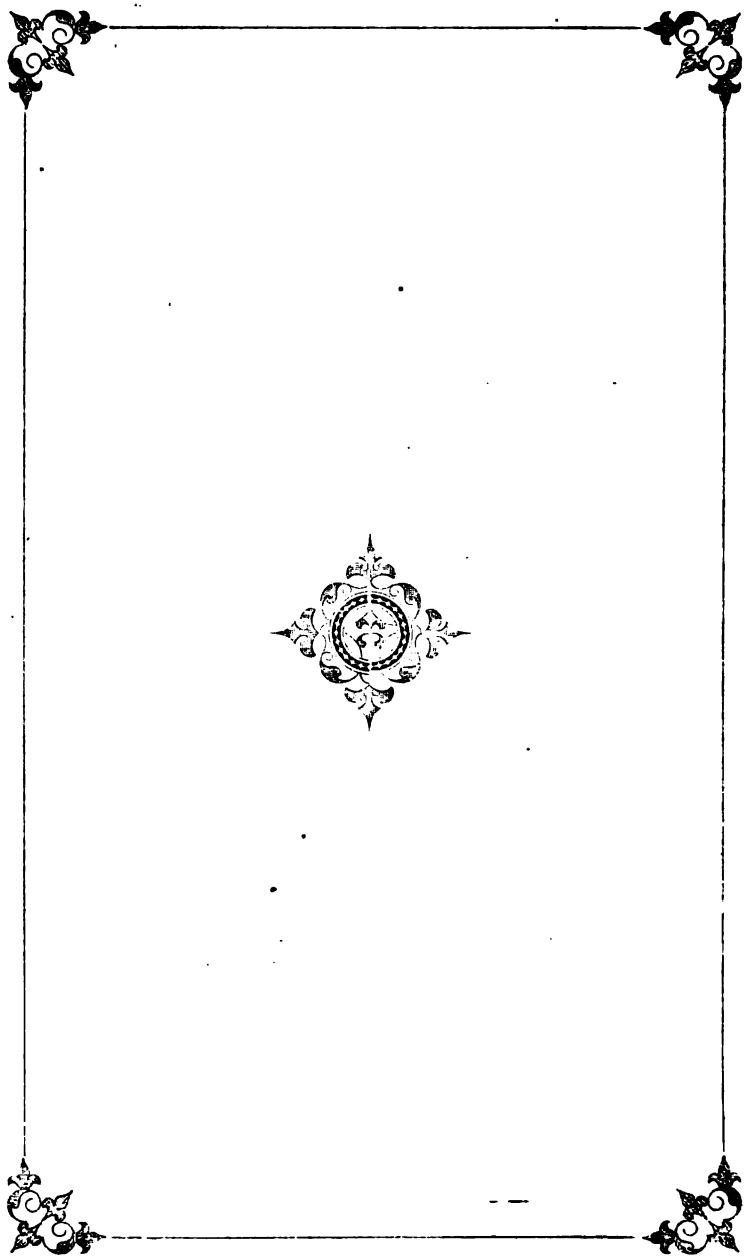


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